

AMERICAN HALF CENTS



the
"LITTLE HALF SISTERS"
(SECOND EDITION)

By Roger S. Cohen, Jr.

AMERICAN HALF CENTS

the

“LITTLE HALF SISTERS” (Second Edition)

A Reference Book on the United States Half Cent
Coined from 1793 to 1857

By Roger S. Cohen, Jr.

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PREFACE

(to Second Edition)

The ten years since I wrote the prior Preface have been filled with an outpouring of information that I hoped would occur. This edition is an attempt to record this data and present some additional thoughts of myself and others. I have also attempted to rectify some of the criticism of the First Edition. Photographs have been improved on a number of varieties and additional photographs of die states have been added. The chapter on "Other Half Cents" has been expanded. A present condition census has been included for each variety.

It should be emphasized that this edition is not the final word. Information continues to be forthcoming. It should be noted that no new dies have been discovered, nor have any mulings of previously known dies turned up. Four new edge varieties of 1794 have come to my attention. Interestingly enough, two of these were mentioned in the November 1921 issue of "The Numismatist".

Rarity ratings as predicted in the First Edition have declined and will continue to do so as more persons continue the search. However, there has not been a major change on any variety nor have any large hoards of Half Cents been uncovered.

The presumed emission sequence as set forth in the First Edition has been changed on 1794 and 1804 to reflect additional facts determined in the ten years since I last wrote. After discussing this matter with various Half Cent numismatists, it has been decided not to change the numbering

system for those years. The diagram of the Emission Sequence is the only change. An explanation of the change is noted in the section on General Comments as to the date. All other years remain as set forth in the First Edition with the exception of 1826 and 1828. Variety #2 of 1826 is now determined to be struck before Variety #1 of 1828.

My collection has continued to grow and the goal of owning one specimen of each variety continues to elude me. Prior to the discovery or rediscovery of the edge varieties of 1794, I had achieved my goal for the period of September 1972 to October 1973. Perhaps the most frustrating experience I ever had, concerned the rediscovery of the large edge letter 1794 Variety #4. I had been offered the date set which contained the coin. I had even removed the 1794 from the set and examined the obverse and reverse. Since I had the die variety in higher condition I declined the coin. My embarrassment was enormous when about a week later a collector called me from California to announce the discovery of the very coin which I had refused.

My prior Preface ended with a request for additional information. I wish to renew this. Perhaps there will be a third edition in the future.

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PREFACE

(To First Edition)

The "Little Half Sisters" of the U.S. Large Cent have been an interest of mine since childhood when I acquired one from a school pal. It was an 1835. Much to my great surprise and chagrin, a coin dealer told me it was only worth 35¢, and shortly thereafter I lost it when visiting the Washington Zoo. The memory is still with me, its condition would be considered Fine by today's standards.

Ten years later, when I reached young adulthood and was collecting Indianhead and Lincoln cents, a family friend gave me a handful of the "Little Half Sisters," which had belonged to his ancestors, with the comment, "Twenty cents took a lot of coins in those days". This started me on a date collection which was completed in about a year. I then borrowed from the ANA Library a copy of Gilbert's 1916 work and set out to classify my coins. No great rarities showed up but my interest was whetted and I accumulated a partial collection by variety. In 1953 I sold the majority of my United States collection to purchase my first home, but kept certain Half Cents as I just could not bear to be without them, and, through the following years, I have been able to assemble a fair collection which has been the basis for this book. I doubt that I will live long enough to acquire an example of each die variety but the possibility exists.

Ebenezer Gilbert's 1916 book is very comprehensive and, with the exception of 2 new reverse dies and 3 mulings of dies known to him, there is little to add directly to his work, when it comes to the coinage struck for circulation. His rarity ratings have generally withstood the test of time. However, his order of listing varieties, as to a presumed emission sequence, is not in order; also, more information has been turned up as to the how and why of certain varieties. As usual, in the quest for more knowledge as to the how and why, even more questions arise, some of which I will attempt to answer.

The purpose of writing this book is that for the last twenty years I have wanted to read it. On at least two prior occasions, I have hoped that someone else would write it. However, I feel that waiting will not get the book done, hence, I have written. I earnestly hope to hear from other collectors so that if there are any facts that I have not mentioned, they can be included in a revised book.

ROGER S. COHEN, JR.

October 1971



**MASSACHUSETTS HALF CENT
THE FIRST AMERICAN HALF CENT**

ERRATA

- Page VI, The Sheldon scale of grading has been reprinted with the permission of the Trustees of the Will of William H. Sheldon, M.D.
- Page XV, Fifth paragraph, seventh line, read number not "numer."
- Page 22, The Williams specimen photographed is not included in the Condition Census. This coin is graded as UNC.
- Page 52, Photograph of Variety #8. This coin, while once owned by Ryder, was not among the coins sold at the Ryder sale of 1954.
- Page 53, The description of the obverse die break should read "head of Liberty."
- Page 65, Description of Obverse 1. At the end of line 5 the word side has been omitted.
- Page 75, The one known reverse die break is illustrated on the photograph of the late die state.
- Page 111, Rarity section, seventh line, read Numerous not "Numerous."

INTRODUCTION

In January 1948, shortly after I joined the Washington Numismatic Society, I was approached by the Secretary to talk on Half Cents. My talk was rather short and prepared on the basis of my observations. I started with the statement, "The Half Cent was a miniature of the Large Cent during the period of its coinage". I then went on to describe the major types and how they related to the Large Cent. My original statement still stands but it now appears that they were "Little Half Sisters", unwanted and considered to be of little importance.

In preparing this work I am not going to give an account of the Mint in its early days but shall make reference to it from time to time. There have been a number of books on this subject. Most recently has been Don Taxay's 1966 work, "The U.S. Mint and Coinage"; also, Frank H. Stewart's 1924 work, "History of the First United States Mint", is an excellent work on this subject.

There are three items which have to do with collectors which I will make reference to, and they are: Rarity, Condition, and Value. These were covered very extensively by Dr. William H. Sheldon in his 1949 work, "Early American Cents", and I agree with him generally.

Rarity

The rarity scale which I shall use is based on the one originally set forth by Dr. Sheldon, which has been generally adopted in American numismatics.

- R-1 Common
- R-2 Not so Common
- R-3 Scarce
- R-4 Very Scarce
(Specimens *ESTIMATED* at 76-200)
- R-5 Rare
(Specimens *ESTIMATED* at 31-75)
- R-6 Very Rare
(Specimens *ESTIMATED* at 13-30)
- R-7 Extremely Rare
(Specimens *ESTIMATED* at 4-12)
- R-8 Uncollectible (Less than 4 Specimens known to the author)

In reading this work it should be remembered that the evaluation as to rarity is mine, based on my observations, and these are *Estimates*, except as to classification R-8. I am reasonably sure that once this book gets into the hands of collectors, I will hear from enough persons to warrant elimination of the R-8 rating, except for new varieties, and once they are publicized they too will no longer be rated R-8.

Condition

The condition classification of a coin is perhaps one of the most controversial subjects in American numismatics. The controversy stems from the fact that two or more persons are expressing judgments. The purpose is to fit the coin into certain classifications of condition which have evolved over many years. The various classifications express the degree that coins have been altered from the moment of mintage. Prior to the publication of "Early American Cents", the use of adjectives to express condition was the only widely used method. In that work, Dr. Sheldon combined a numerical scale with the adjectival scale. This book expanded the classifications. It did not eliminate the controversy as a person making judgment now has a possible 70 points of reference in place of approximately 10 points; however, in practice the Sheldon scale is used with 22 or 23 points of reference.

The author is of the opinion that condition amounts to little more than what the collector, dealer or cataloguer wants it to be. Each person must learn to make his own evaluation and, depending on the circumstances, let his evaluation be known. Condition has become the more important factor over rarity for determining value of most coins, particularly in the last ten years. The reasons for this are beyond the scope of this work as they are complex.

In December 1977, The American Numismatic Association issued "Official ANA Grading Standard for United States Coins" in, among other things, an attempt to halt what has been termed

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by some persons as the "Grading Slide" and achieve some stability as to condition standards. In spite of a good deal of apathy, by some numismatists it appears to me that to some extent the ANA has succeeded.

Half Cent collectors have, for many years, used what is known as the "Sheldon scale of grading." This grading system originally set forth by Dr. Sheldon in "Early American Cents" is copied below with accepted modifications as to numerical grade set in italics. There are also abbreviations set forth in parenthesis that are used in the Condition Census for this book.

Condition

1	BASAL STATE (BS)	<i>Identifiable and un mutilated</i> , but so badly worn that only a portion of the legend or inscription is legible. Enough must remain for positive identification of the variety, although for some varieties this need not necessarily include a readable date.
2	FAIR (FR)	The <i>date</i> and <i>more than half</i> of the inscription and detail can be made out, although perhaps faintly.
3	VERY FAIR (VFR)	The <i>date</i> will be <i>clear</i> and <i>practically all</i> of the detail of the coin can be made out, although faint areas are to be expected, and the coin as a whole may be worn nearly smooth.
4	GOOD	The <i>date</i> together with <i>all of the detail</i> must be <i>very clear</i> . The general relief of the coin may be well worn down.
5	(G)	
6		
7	VERY GOOD	<i>Everything</i> is <i>boldly clear</i> , but the sharpness of the coin may be largely gone. Signs of wear are seen uniformly over the whole coin, not merely on the high surfaces.
8	(VG)	
10		
12	FINE	<i>All of the design</i> and <i>all of the inscriptions</i> are <i>sharp</i> . Wear is appreciable only on the high surfaces. If the coin is examined with a glass, the <i>microscopic</i> detail is gone.
15	(F)	

20	VERY FINE	<i>All the detail</i> is in <i>sharp relief</i> , and <i>only the highest surfaces</i> show wear, even when the glass is applied. The microscopic detail is largely intact except on the high points. These high surfaces will show a little rubbing, or flattening, even to the unaided eye.
25	(VF)	
30		
35		
40	EXTREMELY	Only the <i>slightest trace</i> of wear, or of rubbing, is to be seen on the <i>high points</i> .
45	FINE (EF)	
50	ABOUT	Close attention or the use of a glass should be necessary to make out that the coin is <i>not</i> in perfect Mint State. Typically, the AU-50 coin retains its full sharpness but is darkened or is a little off-color.
55	UNCIRCULATED (AUNC)	
60	MINT STATE	<i>Free from any trace of wear</i> , and the color should be that of a copper coin which has been kept with great care. The color will vary from mint red to light brown or light olive, according to the chemical content and moisture of the prevailing atmosphere in which the coin has been kept. The light brown and live olive colors indicate the first beginnings of a protective patina, or surface "set." When these colors are attractively blended and permanently set on a Mint State early cent, the coin is as highly prized by discerning collectors as is one of brighter color. For condition 60 a minor blemish, perhaps some microscopic injury, or light trace of discoloration may be tolerated. For condition 70, the coin must be exactly as it left the dies, except for a slight mellowing of the color. Condition 60 means Mint State. Condition 70 means <i>perfect</i> Mint State.
65	(UNC)	
70		

NOTE. These descriptions are based on the supposition that no mutilations are present. Many cents have injuries, scratches, or bruises which of course detract from numismatic value and modify condition. Since there is no way of standardizing just how much a particular mutilation damages a coin, it is probably best to grade the coin *as if without* the injury, and then to list or describe the injury separately. This procedure is usu-

ally followed by cataloguers when the coin is of any importance or has any particular value. It should be noted that a number of the early varieties are always found with certain portions of the coin weak—a result of injured or bent dies. Such coins, even when in Mint State, will lack some of their detail. The cataloguer or student of coins must acquaint himself with these varieties and must learn to judge the condition of a particular cent according to the amount of actual wear after it left the dies. In this ability lies much of the skill and art of cent numismatics. The early cents present so many peculiarities and variations in the dies, as well as differences in striking and in later coloration of the copper, that even the keenest of observers could scarcely master them all in a lifetime of study.

A careful reading of both the "Sheldon" and the ANA grading system must be made to realize that there is "Grade Slide" between these two systems except as to Mint State 70. The reason is the approximate 30 years difference in setting standards.

In this work all reference to condition will be based on the "Sheldon" grading system.

Value

In his excellent exercise, "Early American Cents", Dr. Sheldon established basal values for the coins which, when multiplied by the numerical grade of condition, gave the *approximate* value of coins.

I will not attempt to set basal values for Half Cents due to the uncertainty of the coin market. When I first started to actively purchase coins in 1946, the dealer (A. Hepner) from whom I purchased most coins told me, "Hold off on the rarities; they are too high and will come down". He was correct in that they came down some, but they never reached the 1940 prices which I was sure he had in mind. In 1948, against his advice, I purchased from another dealer a 1796 Half Cent in Good condition for \$85.00 which, today (1981) would cost approximately \$2,700.00. When I told him of my purchase, he just shrugged his shoulders and said, "You'll never get your money back on that one". In 1953 it seemed to me the coin market had risen to an unprecedented level. This was one factor which led me to sell the majority of my U.S. coin collection. I made a small profit on my collection. By 1963 it was quite evident that, instead of selling at a high point, I had sold too soon as the increased number of collectors, com-

bined with inflation, had pushed coins to what seemed unbelievable prices. From 1963 to 1971 there was a steady increase in prices, with only an occasional slow down.

During the period of 1971 to 1981 Half Cent prices have increased as a general rule to about two and one-half times their 1971 prices. There are noticeable exceptions to this generalization as to very high condition coins and rare die varieties. Some of these have had as much as a 10 times increase in prices. Whether this pattern of increase will continue is beyond the scope of this book. To those whose main concern is the price increases it is suggested they consult with an economist or a person skilled in foretelling the future.

The task of assigning values to Half Cents is a complex one, but the prices of many of them are published in annual coin catalogues. This makes it possible to determine the approximate current value at any time. The catalogues usually list Half Cents by date and easily distinguished varieties but do not price each variety which is included in this work; therefore, I have developed a system of values for each variety.

The use of this system which was originally set forth in the First Edition of this work has had a further complication added by the adoption of the ANA grading system by annual coin catalogues.

As pointed out in the section on Condition there is "grade slide" between the Sheldon and ANA standards. This is particularly evident as to circulated coins. Half Cents for the period 1793 to 1804 are very rare in uncirculated condition with the exception of 1800. From 1804 through 1811 the greater majority are circulated. From 1825 to 1857 most varieties can be found in uncirculated condition but, again, the majority are circulated.

In using my system, I first determine the condition in accordance with the Sheldon scale and adjust for the grade slide, i.e. if the coin is VG by the Sheldon scale, I use the Fine price by the ANA scale which is the current catalogue price times the factor for the variety to arrive at the approximate value.

In applying this system I do not pay any attention to the grading, if any, by the proposed seller as it only represents his opinion. Any buyer should apply his own standards of condition. I believe that it is useless to argue about condition with a seller unless it is to be used as a form of price

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negotiation. The buyer should also take into consideration such factors as the desire for the coin being offered, the probability of being offered

another specimen and the integrity of the seller.
The factors for Half Cents are:

<i>Date</i>	<i>Catalogue Variety Description</i>	<i>Variety #</i>	<i>Factor</i>
1793	—	all	1
1794	—	2a & 9	1
1794	—	1 & 4a	1.2
1794	—	5a	2.5
1794	—	8	3
1794	—	3a & 7	4
1794	—	6a	4.5
1794	—	1b & 2b	8
1794	—	3b, 4b, 5b & 6b	Speculative
1795	Lettered Edge, Date not Punctuated	1	1
1795	Lettered Edge, Punctuated Date	2a	1
1795	Plain Edge, Punctuated Date	4	1
1795	Plain Edge, Punctuated Date	3	2.5
1795	Plain Edge, Punctuated Date	2b	Speculative
1795	No Pole to Cap	6a	1
1795	No Pole to Cap	5a	1.2
1795	No Pole to Cap	5b	2.5
1795	No Pole to Cap	6b	6
1796	Pole to Cap	2	1
1796	No Pole to Cap	1	1
1797	Lettered Edge	3b	1
1797	Plain Edge	2 & 3a	1
1797	1 over 1	1	1
1797	(Not in Catalogue)	3c	Speculative
1800	—	1	1
1802	Reverse of 1800	1	1
1802	2nd Reverse	2	1
1803	—	1 & 3	1
1803	—	4	1.3
1803	—	2	3.5

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<i>Date</i>	<i>Catalogue Variety Description</i>	<i>Variety #</i>	<i>Factor</i>
1804	Plain 4 with Stems	11	1
1804	Plain 4 No Stems	13	1
1804	Crosslet 4 No Stems	12	1
1804	Crosslet 4 With Stems	9 & 10	1
1804	Crosslet 4 With Stems	1	1.5
1804	Crosslet 4 With Stems	4	6
1804	Crosslet 4 With Stems	2	Speculative
1804	Spiked Chin	6 & 8	1
1804	Spiked Chin	5	2.5
1804	Spiked Chin	7	6
1805	Small 5, No Stems	1	1
1805	Small 5, With Stems	3	1
1805	Small 5, With Stems	2	4
1805	Large 5	4	1
1806	Small 6, No Stems	1	1
1806	Small 6, With Stems	2	1
1806	Small 6, With Stems	3	5.5
1806	Large 6	4	1
1807	—	1	1
1808	Over 7	2	1
1808	Over 7	1	Speculative
1808	Normal Date	3	1
1809	Circle Inside Zero	4	1
1809	Over 6	5	1
1809	Normal Date	3 & 6	1
1809	Normal Date	2	1.2
1809	Normal Date	1	10
1810	—	1	1
1811	—	2	1
1811	—	1	1.2
1825	—	2	1
1825	—	1	1.5
1826	—	1	1
1826	—	2	1.2
1828	12 Stars	2	1
1828	13 Stars	3	1
1828	13 Stars	1	1.3
1829	—	1	1
1831	—	1	1
1832	—	2 & 3	1
1832	—	1	1.2

All Half Cents after 1832 are valued at current catalogue prices.

This value system will not work precisely in all cases and is intended to be used as a guide. It should not be construed as an inflexible, rigid rule or formula; however, I believe it to be responsive to changing coin values.

NOTES AS TO ARRANGEMENT OF CHAPTERS

The arrangement of the chapters is one for each date which was struck for circulation, with a final chapter about "Other Half Cents". These are those pieces of metal which have the words HALF CENT on them, which are not coins struck for circulation by the U.S. Mint. This last chapter will include proofs struck from regular dies. To me a proof is just an ornamental coin, minted to be saved but not spent. Collectors who specialize in proofs may have an interest in them, but I prefer the regular coinage which was turned out for the then general public of which I am a later day member.

The reason for the chapters being by date is that it is the historical and usual method of classifying United States coins. This classification system has been used since the beginning of collecting in this country in the 1840's and 1850's, and has become ingrained in the collecting fraternity.

Each date chapter is arranged in the following order:

1. Design Description
2. Die Preparation
3. Planchets
4. Varieties in Order of *Presumed Emission Sequence*
 - a. Photographs of Obverse and Reverse
 - b. Main Feature of Obverse Die
 - c. Main Feature of Reverse Die
 - d. Known Die Breaks
 - e. Rarity and Comments on Variety
 - f. Condition Census
5. Keys to Varieties of Date
6. Emission Sequence
7. General Comments as to Date

Design Description

This is a general description of the design when it changes or is altered. I am presuming that the reader of this book is somewhat familiar with U.S. coinage, therefore, my descriptions will be brief.

Die Preparation

Coins then as now are stamped cold from obverse and reverse dies of a harder metal. During the period of Half Cent coinage, it was an early form of steel. Dies were cut completely by hand in 1793. In 1794 apparently two hubs or puncheons were prepared and used for some obverse and reverse dies. These hubs had part of the design raised in a similar manner to the coin produced from the finished die. This hub was stamped into the die and produced the majority of the die. The engraver then used smaller punches and a graver to complete the die, which was then hardened by a process known as case-hardening. Apparently the method used by the Mint was ineffective as most Half Cents, as well as other coins of the period, show irregular lines and extra masses of metal where the dies have broken or cracked. Dies also appear to have warped surfaces due to the hardening process or use which produce bulges or depressions on the coins. In The National Archives there is a letter from the Director of the Mint, Elias Boudinot, to Matthew Boulton in England, dated July 10, 1798, requesting instructions for the hardening of dies, as the loss of dies was greater than he thought necessary.

Hubs were used throughout the Half Cent coinage, except for 1793, and as time went on, the dies improved both as to the hardness and the durability, and the use of hubs was expanded to an entire reverse die.

Planchets

In the first years of the Mint, the production of planchets for copper coinage was a laborious, time-consuming task. All copper used seems to have come from England in the form of sheets or in the form of domestic scrap metal which would have to be cast into ingots and rolled. In early 1796 a Mr. Coltman, representing the Governor

and Company Copper Miners in England, started shipping sheet copper to the Mint for the purpose of making planchets. As a result of some correspondence in April 1796, Coltman, on July 11, 1796, shipped via the vessel *REBECCA*, 20 cases of sheet copper and 41 small cases of copper planchets. It is not known whether any Half Cent planchets were included but, judging from the rarity of 1796 dated Half Cents, I doubt there were any. In 1797 the Mint started purchasing satisfactory copper planchets from Matthew Boulton, of the firm Boulton and Watt, in Soho, near Birmingham, England. This arrangement continued until the late 1830's, when all contracts for planchets were made with Crocker & Bros. of Taunton, Massachusetts. This firm continued to furnish copper planchets for the Cent and Half Cent until the coins were discontinued in 1857.

Half Cents appear to have had lower standards for planchets than Cents in the years 1794 to 1803. The Mint used, in addition to regularly prepared planchets, misstruck Cents, and private tokens. These items were first put through a roller to reduce them to the approximate thickness, and then cut to size. Many Half Cents of this period will exhibit features of the planchet's prior stamping, which are referred to as an undertype. After the 1802 dated coins all planchets used were prepared outside the Mint, so that all the Mint had to do was to stamp the planchets and ship coins when necessary.

Varieties

Each obverse and reverse die combination known to me has been assigned a number in the order of the presumed emission sequence of each date. Thus, the first obverse and reverse die combination of a date such as 1793 will be identified as 1793 Variety #1. The second obverse and reverse die combination of that date will be 1793 Variety #2. This system assigns a separate number to each known die combination of a date.

For the dates 1794, 1795 and 1797, there are die combinations struck on planchets which have differences in edge markings and/or weight. In these situations I have assigned a small letter to follow the die combination number. For example, the second die combination of 1795 is first struck on a thick planchet weighing approximately 104 grains and has its edge incused with the words TWO HUNDRED FOR A DOLLAR. This coin is identified as 1795 Variety #2a. The same die com-

bination was used on a thin planchet weighing approximately 84 grains with a plain edge. This coin is identified as 1795 Variety #2b.

In setting the standards as to whether a die combination will have a further refinement as set forth in the preceding paragraph, I have eliminated errors in edge lettering, die breaks, and, with one exception, variations in the weight of the planchets. The exception on planchet weight occurs on die combinations 5 and 6 of 1795. In this case the Mint used thin, plain edge planchets weighing approximately 84 grains, and thick, wider, plain edge planchets weighing approximately 115 grains.

Photographs

The photographs of each variety are enlarged. This will enable the reader to easily view each die. The coins used for the photographs are from the collection of the author and other Half Cent collectors of this era. The names of the persons who have contributed their coins for photographs are listed among the section on References and Acknowledgments.

Condition Census

An interesting sidelight of Dr. Sheldon's 1949 book "Early American Cents" was his concept of "condition census". This concept as originally set forth consisted of two numbers. The first was the finest specimen of a variety known to Dr. Sheldon. The second number represented an average of the grades of the next five finest specimens of a variety known to him. In 1958 Dr. Sheldon's succeeding book "Penny Whimsy" expanded on the condition census so that the six highest condition census coins of each variety were listed as their numerical grade in a descending order. This change was caused by the fact that persons interested in Large Cents desired to know what were the highest grade specimens of each variety. Auction cataloguers as well as other sellers of Large Cents also desired this information so as to enhance their offerings and produce higher prices.

The term "condition census" has been expanded over the years by numismatists to include all coins including Half Cents. A great amount of effort has been expended to add more information and, at the present time, the easiest way to start a lively conversation with a fellow numismatist is to bring up the subject of what coins are in the condition census.

The problems of a condition census are endless. For example, no two persons will grade coins exactly alike even though both persons use the same grading guide. Quite frequently ownership of a high grade coin automatically adds 5 points to its grade in the eyes of the owner, while the reverse is very often true when a person does not own the coin in question. Some persons are known to grade conservatively and others, particularly newer collectors, tend to overgrade coins. There is also the never ending problem of previously unknown coins becoming known to certain persons who do not make their discoveries known.

Another feature of the condition census, which is quite popular presently, is the attempt to list all prior owners of specimens. This may be desirable if the coin was in a collection which was well known and existed for many years. However, many coins change ownership so rapidly that in a period of five years some coins have had as many as ten owners. The listing of these former owners would not increase the coins interest or desirability, thus I believe that this type of information is best omitted from the condition census set forth in this book.

The First Edition of this book did not set forth a condition census. This edition has one as I understand it as of August 1981. Before going into the details as to how I have done the census, a little past history should be set forth in regard to the Half Cent condition census.

The criteria set forth in Dr. Sheldon's 1949 book "Early American Cents" were easily applied to Half Cents. This was first done in an auction catalogue of the New Netherlands Coin Company of New York. The occasion was the sale of the Hiller Ryder Half Cents in 1954. The writer of the catalogue slavishly followed Dr. Sheldon by listing the coins in a straight through numbering system, assigning basal values, and using the term condition census freely in the catalogue. This same type of cataloguing continued through the 1950's and 1960's but the information as to what the cataloguer considered to be the condition census coins was only made available when it was desired to increase the demand for a coin being offered. Half Cent collectors had only the condition census information that could be gleaned from these auction catalogues and a great deal of it was inaccurate and contradictory.

In 1971, upon publication of my First Edition, I

was greatly surprised by the number of Half Cent collectors who desired a condition census. Due to this demand I assembled all the data I was aware of. Over the last ten years I have compared notes with many collectors and dealers and have carefully noted coins made available through auction catalogues. Many private transactions have been reported to me. I have published on two prior occasions in the pages of "Pennywise" the condition census as I knew of it in 1973 and 1977.

This book uses the adjectival scale as set forth by Dr. Sheldon and repeated in the Introduction. The numerical grade designation has been eliminated to reduce the type of controversy which is present among Large Cent collectors as of this writing. The number of coins listed depends on the adjectival categories used. They are arranged in descending order and all categories are used which are necessary to arrive at not less than 7 coins.

IT SHOULD BE EMPHASIZED THAT NOT ALL SPECIMENS IN EXISTENCE ARE KNOWN TO ME AND THAT AS THE YEARS GO BY HIGHER CONDITION SPECIMENS WILL BECOME KNOWN, SO THAT THE CONDITION CENSUS LISTED HERE WILL BECOME OUTDATED. COLLECTORS SHOULD BE WARY OF ANY PERSON OFFERING TO SELL ANY COIN AND STATING THAT IT IS IN "THE CONDITION CENSUS." THE SELLER MAY NOT BE USING THE SHELDON SCALE FOR HIS GRADING AND IF THE PROPOSED SALE IS MORE THAN ONE YEAR AFTER THE WRITING OF THESE WORDS (AUGUST 1981) CAUTION SHOULD BE EXERCISED BY THE PROSPECTIVE PURCHASER.

Keys to Varieties of Date

At the conclusion of the listing of each variety for a date, I have prepared a guide as to how to quickly identify each variety. I have devised this from my observations. With the exceptions of

1794, 1804 and 1809, the rapid identification of varieties is very simple. These guides should help those who desire to collect the "Little Half Sisters".

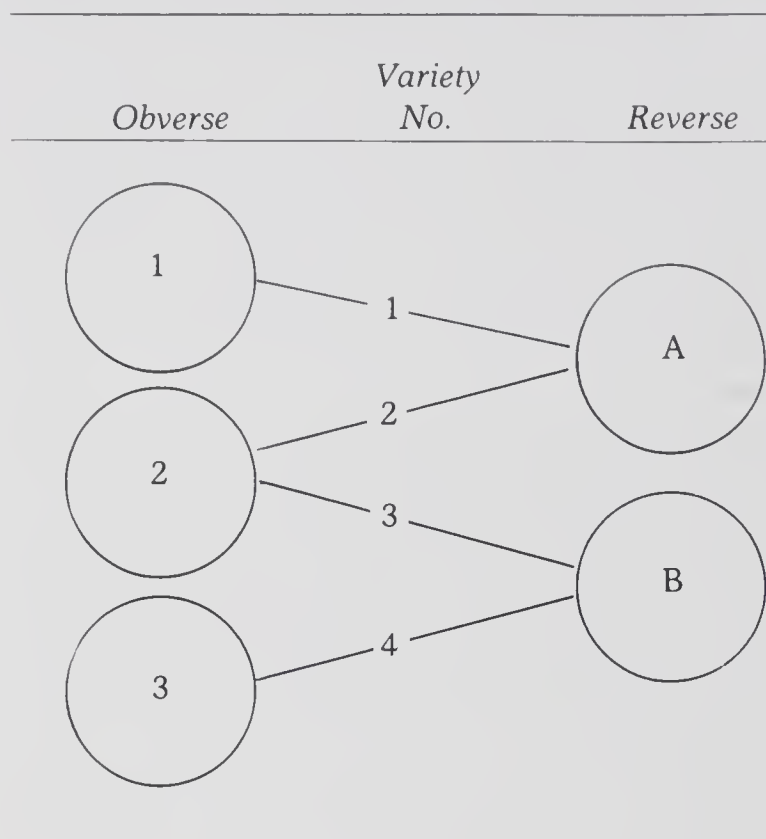
Emission Sequence

In the very early days of collecting U.S. coins, collectors started by accumulating one coin of each date. After this was complete, or nearly complete, certain collectors noted that there were slight differences in coins bearing the same date, so out came the magnifying glasses. Before long it was determined that for a coin such as the Half Cent of 1804, there were five different types, depending on whether the 4 in the date was plain or had a crosslet on it, and whether the reverse had stems to the wreath or not; and if the coin had a crosslet 4 and stems to the wreath, did the figure of Liberty have a spike on her chin? Other collectors went beyond this and noticed that certain reverses with stems were different. Eventually, as a result of curiosity, it was realized that each coinage die could be identified due to certain peculiarities of its preparation. It was further realized that certain dies were used before others due to apparent deterioration of the die. After Ebenezer Gilbert published his book in 1916, dealer S.H. Chapman of Philadelphia, in cataloguing the famous Alvord collection of Half Cents in 1924, made note that "The arrangement of dies of 1794 by the late Mr. E. Gilbert is most palpably out of order". However Gilbert noted in his book all the die states of which he was aware. This plus the observations of Half Cent collectors since Gilberts time have enabled us to form our own ideas as to what *might* have been the order of emission.

The trouble with trying to establish this is the fact that people just did not make exact records of what they were doing 188 to 124 years ago; so at best an emission sequence is an educated guess. Consider some problems as they relate to Half Cents. For the year 1799 a record in The National Archives indicates that 12,167 coins were delivered. I have never heard of a 1799 dated specimen. For the calendar year 1795, 25,600 are recorded as being delivered, and for 1796 the figure is 115,480; yet the dated 1796 coins is one of the rarest dates and 1795 is very common in comparison. I could cite more examples.

Another problem arises when, after careful

study, you determine that three obverse dies and two reverse dies were used. You prepare a diagram based on the deterioration of the dies, as follows:



When you discover that obverse 1 was used with reverse B, what is the answer?

The primary error you have made is that you have assumed only one coining press was used. It could have been two. It is known that the Mint had three coining presses in 1793, and by 1802 there were five coining presses. Half Cents seem to have been particularly subject to interruption and whims of the coiner. This was probably due to the fact that the demand for the coin was limited. The striking of Half Cents probably occurred when there was a sufficient supply of planchets and time could be spared from minting more important coins.

In this work I have set forth an emission sequence for each date; however, this is not the final word. It appears to me that some coins were struck as many as three years later than the date which the coin bears. Perhaps I have allowed myself too much license in doing this but, from what I have read of the Half Cent, it was not only the coin of least value; it was considered by the Mint to be the least important and therefore probably subject to license when it was coined.

A SHORT HISTORY OF HALF CENT COLLECTING

This writer has collected Half Cents and other coins for over 35 years. He has often wondered what occurred in the past especially with regard to collecting activities of Half Cents. Specifically, who were the earlier collectors? What coins were in their collections? From what sources did the Half Cent lore originate of which I've heard and read?

Large Cent collectors have a source for some of this information in Dr. William H. Sheldon's excellent work "Early American Cents", published in 1949, and its later revision "Penny Whimsy." In his book, Dr. Sheldon reviews Large Cent literature which had been published prior to his work. He also mentioned numerous earlier collectors and dealers who had contributed to the body of knowledge of Large Cents and Half Cents.

Large Cents and Half Cents have a number of things in common. Beginning in 1793 they were the first and only denominations coined by the U.S. Mint in its first full year of operation. Other similarities i.e. design, planchet sources, legal tender status, etc., continued through 1857. The Mint Act of 1857 changed the size and alloy of the cent and discontinued coinage of the Half Cent. This occurrence first popularized and initiated interest in the collecting of coins in this country. The early collector's objective was to form from coins in circulation a date set of Large and Half Cents. There are many more Large Cents, some 19 times as many with better continuity and number of dates available for collectors. During the period of 1860 to 1900 numerous guides were published to identify the varieties of Half Cents and Large Cents. Most of the printed material on early U.S. copper coins dealt with the Large Cent.

The first listing describing varieties of Half Cents occurred in 1869 when Dr. Edward Maris issued "Varieties of the Copper Issues of the United States Mint in the Year 1794". This publication assigned certain varieties of cents with

names, such as "The Ornate", "Egeria", and "Sans Milling." Half Cents were similarly treated to this, but their usual place was the back of the book. Maris' book is highly prized today, not for its text but for its place in the history of U.S. copper coin collecting literature.

In early 1879 Ed. Frossard, a coin dealer of the era, published "Monograph of United States Cents and Half Cents." This effort appears to be the first one at listing varieties of the entire series by date. The descriptions can be followed with some difficulty today as Frossard did not identify his obverses and reverses by number and letter, but he did assign numbers to many of the varieties. The book also had plates illustrating the coins described and for the first time coin collectors had a guide for attributing U.S. Cents and Half Cents.

Ed. Frossard had a competing dealer by the name of J. Walter Scott who published a periodical entitled "The Coin Collectors Journal." In late 1879, and continuing into 1883, a series of articles appeared in Scott's Journal written by David Proskey on varieties of Half Cents which assigned numbers to the obverse dies and letters to the reverse dies. Half Cents became known by their Proskey numbers rather than Frossard numbers due to the depth of Mr. Proskey's work. The last article was in April 1883 on the 1834 Half Cent. Mr. Proskey never finished the series to 1857, but perhaps the lack of varieties of coins struck for circulation in the final years made it so that articles were not considered necessary.

During the period of 1860 to 1924 there were no sales featuring Half Cents only. Most Half Cents sold during this period were part of extensive United States collections formed by prominent collectors of the period. Most sale catalogues of the period listed a coin by its denomination, date and its condition. There seemed to be a paucity of descriptive language and plates in those old cata-

logues as compared to the present day well illustrated and garrulous catalogues. The principal exception to the above statement is some of the catalogues issued by brothers S.H. and Henry Chapman of Philadelphia, who were active coin dealers from the 1880's to the 1930's. They produced some beautifully illustrated catalogues, now highly prized by numismatic bibliophiles. However, with the exception of S.H. Chapman's sale (Alvord) in 1924, I know of few specific Half Cents which can be traced to these early sales.

Publication of the "Numismatist" began in 1888 and has continued to the present. The first article on Half Cents appeared in the February 1895 issue authored by George W. Rice, a collector of that era. The article was entitled "Restrikes of U.S. Half Cents." This article first describes what was then, and continues to be, one of the most controversial aspects of Half Cents, namely, the origin of the proof-only specimens and what is an original and what is a restrike. (See Chapter 34 of this book.) Frossard noted that the reverses of these coins could be classified as to Large Berry or Small Berry and that the angle of the ribbon tying the wreath was different. Proskey did not discuss any of this in his articles.

In 1897 Sylvester S. Crosby issued "The United States Coinage of 1793—Cents and Half Cents." This book illustrated the four varieties known plus another coin (The Washington Head) that was very quickly determined to be a fabrication. Crosby numbered his obverses in the order in which they had appeared on the Frossard plate but the reverses were not so treated. His numbering and letters system did not follow a presumed emission sequence. It appears to have been presented in this manner solely so as to not copy Frossard.

In the June 1908 issue of the "Numismatist" an article appeared which contained information as to die varieties of 1794. Charles Steigerwalt, a coin dealer of Lancaster, Pa., who held the office of "Counterfeit Detector" in the American Numismatic Association, was the writer. Similar to Crosby's work on 1793, he numbered his obverses in the order that they had appeared on the Frossard book plate. His lettering of the reverses, contrary to Crosby, followed the sequence of the Frossard book plate.

In September, 1915, Dr. George R. Ross of Lebanon, Pa., a neighboring town to Lancaster, Pa., started a series of Half Cent articles in the

"Numismatist" in which he identified varieties of 1793. The next month he described varieties of 1794 and each month thereafter another year or two was similarly treated until May 1916. In this issue Dr. Ross listed with brief descriptions all the varieties for all years with which he was acquainted. The reason for this interruption in his series can only be assumed to be the publication in March, 1916, of the Gilbert book on Half Cents which will be discussed later. Dr. Ross's articles then picked up where they had left off the next month and in April 1917 the last of his articles appeared.

To this writer the Ross articles are excellent material. It is possible now to find fault with some of his data and presentation, but at the time they represented a pinnacle of numismatic completeness in Half Cents that was not exceeded for many years. Ross's articles went to great lengths to identify not only varieties but die states as well. The order of numbering was based on a presumed emission sequence. The Ross articles were ultimately destined to be forgotten by most numismatists due to the almost simultaneous publication of the Gilbert book on Half Cents.

It is apparent that this period was one of considerable interest in Half Cents. The origin of increased interest was due to the specialization in the collecting of United States coins by denomination and date. This had been brought on by the increase in collectors and also the availability of coins via advertisements in the "Numismatist."

The leading promoter of Half Cents at this time was a New York dealer by the name of Thomas L. Elder. One of Elder's customers was a collector by the name of Ebenezer Gilbert, who in 1915 was 80 years of age. Gilbert and Elder had previously issued, in 1909, a book on 1796 Large Cents. This book is still considered to be one of the most vexing and misleading of all the books on Large Cents. This was because there were duplications in varieties illustrated and Gilbert's descriptive material was inaccurate and incomplete. The book seemed to have been hastily assembled for the purpose of getting something into print. This background is germane for it helped explain Gilbert's next project regarding Half Cents.

The appearance of the Ross articles in the "Numismatist" must have created some concern to Messrs. Elder and Gilbert. Undoubtedly, Gilbert had mentioned that he wanted to publish a book on Half Cents. Elder must have told him that they

had better do something fast or there would be no use in publishing such a book as Dr. Ross was about to "steal their thunder."

The resulting work "The United States Half Cents" by Gilbert was a remarkable book despite an irregular manuscript, major typographical errors, lack of historical data and no attempt to set forth any reasonable emission sequence. Gilbert and Elder had merely paraphrased Crosby for the 1793's; Steigerwalt for the 1794's adding a new variety and using Proskey and Frossard for the remaining dates. They added in numerical order new varieties that had come to their attention including two varieties, one of which was an alteration and the other a damaged specimen of a common variety. Their book was quite complete in listing die varieties and die breaks as only four new varieties have been identified since publication in 1916.

This book also contained six photographic plates which made identification of varieties fairly easy. However, a number of errors on the plates required careful reading of the text for correct attribution of a coin. Despite these shortcomings, the Gilbert book remained the standard reference on Half Cents for over 50 years. An illustration of the problem with Gilbert's book occurred last year when this author was challenged on the Cohen attribution of a 1795 Half Cent. The challenger stated that the reverse of the author's coin did not match the Gilbert plate for variety No. 7. The challenger was referring to the No. 7 reverse for 1794 and was not aware that the Gilbert plates did not illustrate the reverse of No. 7 of 1795.

The marketing of Gilbert's book has some rather interesting sidelights with which the writer is somewhat familiar. The book was printed in rather large numbers and the plates were made from glass negatives (which are still in existence.) There was an ample supply to meet collector and dealer needs for many years. In the early 1950's, the writer purchased from B.M. Douglas an unbound and untrimmed copy of Gilbert. Mr. Douglas had obtained it from Mr. Paul Seitz of Glen Rock, Pa., who, Douglas explained, was a relative of Tom Elder. Mr. Elder died in 1948 and the writer well remembers reading his obituary in the "Numismatist."

Apparently there was continued demand for Gilbert's book in the mid 1950's. Mr. Seitz advertised the sale of Gilbert's book, the text of which was from the original printing. Seitz added glossy

new prints from the original plates and spiral bound it in blue plastic. Since that time, various cheap reprints of Gilbert have been turned out in which the plates can barely be used.

The Gilbert book shows the great haste that must have occurred in its preparation. Nevertheless, since 1916 collections were formed and catalogued in which the Gilbert book was the only basis for identification of varieties.

The Gilbert book lists the collectors whose coins were used for his plates. These collectors, presumably, had the most extensive and some of the highest condition specimens known and were numismatically prominent in 1916. The collections of Ryder, Eaton and F.R. Alvord are among the earliest ones to which some presently known Half Cents can be traced.

The Hillyer Ryder collection was sold in 1954 by the New Netherlands Coin Co. While not extensive in varieties, the condition of the coins was among the highest known. The collection of Commodore Eaton was sold in 1929 by Henry Chapman. It is unfortunate for present collectors that it was not illustrated, nor were the coins described in the loquacious manner that has become so prevalent today. However, numerous coins are traceable to this collection because the buyers of Eaton's coins were, for the most part, better known collectors and dealers who noted that the coins were from the Eaton collection.

Other collectors listed as having loaned coins for photographing in the Gilbert book were Lyman H. Low, Henry C. Miller, Dr. George P. French and Vernon Bugar.

F.R. Alvord's collection was sold in 1924 by S.H. Chapman of Philadelphia, who made the plates for the Gilbert book. This sale was extraordinary in that the catalogue's illustrative plates were produced by the rotogravure process enabling present day collectors to know the condition of Mr. Alvord's coins. The extensive collection included every variety, struck for circulation listed by Gilbert except the rare 1805. (#2 in my book) It also listed two new edge lettering varieties of 1794 i.e., #1b with small edge letters and #2b with large edge letters. An interesting sidelight was Alvord's collecting lettered edge coins according to whether the edge lettering was up or down in relation to the obverse of the coin. This feature was solely dependent upon how the planchet was fed into the coining press, and certainly the Mint workmen paid no attention to this detail.

This method of classification is not considered to be of any importance to today's collector. Alvord's collection was also very extensive in die states, one variety (#7 of 1804 in this book) of his collection had the first known specimen which exhibited a broken reverse die.

Very little is known about the personal lives of these early collectors; however, recently the writer was able to obtain the obituary of Mr. Alvord from the "York (PA) Dispatch" of November 2, 1923. "Frederick Reed Alvord died at 5 AM on November 1, 1923 as a result of several heart attacks. He had been born in Marcellus, New York on March 16, 1868. He was educated at Colgate Academy in Hamilton, N.Y. He moved to York, Pa. in 1894 and became the General Manager of the New York Wire Cloth Co. located in York. He was buried in Hamilton, N.Y. and the funeral services were held at the home of his father, Charles T. Alvord, who was at that time nearly 90 years of age. He was survived by a son and two daughters." The obituary contained a few other facts, none of which would be of interest to the readers of this work. The item I found of interest was the obituary omitted any indication that Alvord was a prominent coin collector. It can only be surmised that his family did not want this to be general knowledge or the family did not consider his coin collecting to be of any significance.

The year 1924, in addition to the Alvord sale, also produced another milestone in the publication of Frank H. Stewart's "History of the First United States Mint." This was the first book to have as its main subject a reliable history of the U.S. Mints coinage. Prior to this time numismatic works with the exception of S.S. Crosby had concerned themselves with the contemporary coins and used hearsay as to their history. Stewart first became interested in this subject when he, acting as agent for his employer, bought the original Mint site and building in 1907. Stewart's Company proposed to demolish the old building constructed in 1792 and erect a new building suited to their needs. After Stewart's employer acquired this historic structure he became enamoured with its significance. He attempted to have the building preserved, but it suffered the usual fate of many historic structures and was demolished. Stewart did the next best thing, he photographed and carefully recorded what was discovered during the demolition. One interesting item to the writer is the photograph on page 119 of the remains of a

Large Cent or Talbot Allum & Lee token which had been rolled out and a Half Cent planchet cut from it.

Stewart spent the next 13 years after the building was demolished researching what he had discovered during the demolition. His search led him to the Mint's written records which at that time were stored in the third Philadelphia Mint building. He must have spent many hours pouring over papers and ledgers as his book has data that could only have come from such an exhaustive study. During this period, Stewart had a painting done, based on his research, of how the first Mint building must have appeared. The writer has seen copies of this painting used to illustrate various numismatic articles with the caption that it was painted at the time the Mint was in operation! Taken as a whole Stewart's book must be considered as the starting point of historic research into coinage of the U.S. Mint.

During the period from 1920 to approximately 1950, there seem to have been a number of collectors of Half Cents, but their numbers were few in comparison to the collectors of Large Cents. Commodore Eaton, who has been previously mentioned, contributed two articles on the subject of Half Cents to the "Numismatist" in November and December of 1921. These articles are discussed in the chapter on 1794 so their content will not be repeated here.

Another collector of note in this period was Joseph L. Brobston of Philadelphia who was an official of a cement company. Mr. Brobston's final collection was sold by a fixed price list in 1963. This collection was complete as to the varieties struck for circulation based on the Gilbert numbers plus a new variety which he had discovered. It also contained most of the proof-only dates. The writer viewed this collection at the time of the ANA convention in New York in 1952. The collection was on display at the store of the numismatic firm of Stacks then located on 46th Street. This was my first viewing of Half Cents in the higher grades of condition and I was very impressed with the collection.

It had been mentioned in a previous writing that Mr. Brobston planned to write a book on Half Cents. It is not known to the writer where the manuscript is, if it was ever completed. It is not surprising that such a book was planned as any advanced collector of this period was quite aware of the defects of the Gilbert book. However, any

significant historical research could not easily be done, as in 1933 the records of the Philadelphia Mint were transferred to The National Archives in Washington, D.C.

Prior to making these records available to researchers, the Archives had to complete a Preliminary Inventory which seems to have taken until at least 1950. One might ask what took so long? In defense of the National Archives, it should be pointed out when the Archives Building in Washington, D.C. was completed in 1933, records were transferred from all over the country in large quantities. The task of The National Archives is immense. It took them until the late 1930's just to store such irreplaceable documents as the Declaration of Independence and The Constitution properly. The Preliminary Inventory of Record Group 104 is very long and it was done with the idea of aiding researchers. Nevertheless, many items are misclassified, mainly due to the manner in which the records were stored during the 140 years prior to their being transferred to The National Archives. An illustration of the immense task concerns one entry in the Preliminary Inventory. The Correspondence files of the Philadelphia Mint for the period 1792 to 1899 take seventy-five feet of file space which means a stack of papers seventy-five feet high.

The decade from 1950 to 1960 was one of previously unsurpassed interest in United States numismatics. During this decade Half Cents drew considerable interest; contrary to the booms of the late 1930's and the World War II years. There seem to be a number of reasons for this. First, a single book, authored by Dr. William H. Sheldon was published on the Early Date Large Cents. It was reliable as to the varieties, and it had a condition census. It also contained some historical data, based on Stewart's work and a rudimentary emission sequence. Second, numismatic research was begun in The National Archives, and third, the idea of issuing a revision of Gilbert's book was revived. This idea was announced in the pages of the "Numismatist" in May, 1952. The revivor of the idea was Walter Breen. I can remember reading the announcement and thinking it was about time as the differences between Dr. Sheldon's book and Gilbert's were immense.

In July, 1952, I met Walter Breen in the Washington, D.C. coin shop of B.M. Douglas where I was contemplating my first purchase of a 1797 lettered edge Half Cent. Mr. Breen pronounced it

to be genuine which assured its addition to my growing Half Cent collection. As Mr. Breen resided in Baltimore, MD at that time, an exchange of Half Cent information occurred over the next few months. The information which I received really increased my interest and I looked forward to the publication of Mr. Breen's book. For some reason, this book was never published.

Subsequent to my writing the above paragraph in August 1981, it was formally announced in October 1981 that another manuscript was in the process of preparation. The announced publication date was stated to be "three months from now."

During the decade of the 1950's three significant collections and numerous insignificant ones, including mine, were sold. The significant sales were the Hillyer Ryder sale which has been previously mentioned, the "Williams Sale" in 1950 by the Numismatic Gallery and the "Anderson-Dupont" sale in 1954 by Stacks. In all of these sales the Half Cents were only a portion of the total sale. The Half Cents, for the most part, were higher condition ones that went, generally, to collectors that specialized in Half Cents, thereby continuing a known chain of ownership.

The decade from 1960 to 1970 was marked by a continuing interest in Half Cents and a growing concern over the non-appearance of a revision of the Gilbert book. In 1962 a booklet, entitled "The Empire Guide to UNITED STATES HALF CENTS 1793-1857" by Q. David Bowers and James F. Ruddy was published. The good points of this booklet were the addition of the three new varieties discovered since the publication of the Gilbert book, a listing of the proof-only coins; some historical data; and on a few dates, an attempt to follow a logical emission sequence even though this was not stated in the booklet. The bad points were a cryptic style of writing; a lack of illustrations for easy identification of varieties, typographical errors; the fact that known historical data was not included; and a substantial overstating of rarity on a number of varieties. For those who had been led to expect more, the booklet was quite a disappointment. The writer acquired a copy in 1966 (He was inactive in Half Cents for the period 1956 to 1966) and immediately thought, "this is not what I had in mind for a revision of Gilbert". Others, some with great fanfare, also announced that they were going to publish a

revision of the Gilbert book, but these ideas seem never to have gotten to the printing press.

Two significant collections changed ownership in the 1960's. The Brobston collection was sold, as previously mentioned, by a fixed price list of Stacks starting in 1963. The majority of the coins were sold very quickly, but as recently as the winter of 1980-81 a collector mentioned to the writer that some Half Cents in Stacks store stock were in Brobston envelopes and had apparently not been sold. The other collection belonged to Philip M. Showers of Brooklyn, N.Y. In 1969 Stacks sold this collection as a unit to a collector who was not, to my knowledge, a known Half Cent specialist. This collection which was started in the 1930's, contained every known Gilbert variety except four. The majority of the coins were in high grades of condition. Stacks prepared twelve presentation type books with photographs to record the extent and depth of the collection prior to its sale. This book has not been made available to the general public. The Showers Collection remained intact until 1976 when the 1969

purchaser unexpectedly disposed of it at a rather large coin show. After passing through a number of dealer's hands that day, it was made available to a Half Cent collector who acquired those specimens which improved his collection.

In the year 1967 an organization known as The Early American Coppers Club was founded which publishes, on a bi-monthly basis, "Pennywise." This periodical serves as a forum for Half Cent collectors. The writer highly recommends this club to anyone interested in the subject of this short history.

The year 1971 was a turning point with the publication of the First Edition of this book. As I noted in the Preface of this edition, there has been an outpouring of information. Earlier collectors realized their thoughts could now be published and freely exchanged. Newer collectors, who were not aware of the conditions that had existed for the prior twenty years, joined into the free exchange and many of them have become dedicated Half Cents numismatists. All of these persons have contributed to this work.

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GLOSSARY OF PHOTOGRAPH CAPTIONS

Many of the coins photographed herein were previously part of well known Half Cent Collections or Sales of the past, or are in present day Collections. These coins are captioned by a name such as *(Showers)*. If the coin photographed has been in two or more Collections or Sales, listed below it will be hyphenated

- ALLENBURGER* — The Royal Sale by B. Max Mehl, 1948
ALVORD — F. R. Alvord Sale by S. H. Chapman, 1924
ATWATER — William C. Atwater Sale by B. Max Mehl, 1946
BEYMER — The Collection of Jack Beymer
BROBSTON — Joseph L. Brobston, Fixed Price list by Stacks, 1963
DUPONT — The Anderson-Dupont Sale, Part II, by Stacks, 1954
EATON — The Collection of Commodore W. C. Eaton or the Sale of the same name by Henry Chapman, 1929
GROSS — The Collection of Richard H. Gross
McGUIGAN — The Collection of James R. McGuigan
MILLS — The John G. Mills Sale by Henry and S. H. Chapman, April 1904
RAPOPORT — Rapoport, Field, Diamond & Farouk Sale by B. Max Mehl, 1951
RYDER — Hillyer Ryder Sale by New Netherlands Coin Co., 1954
SHOWERS — Philip M. Showers Collection, a photographic record by Stacks, 1969
UNGAR — The Collection of Sam Ungar
WILLIAMS — The Charles Williams Sale by the Numismatic Gallery, 1950

MANY COINS DO NOT HAVE A CAPTION, THESE COINS ARE NOT IDENTIFIED AS FORMERLY BEING IN WELL KNOWN COLLECTIONS OR SALES OF THE PAST.

1793

DESIGN DESCRIPTION Obverse. Bust of Liberty with Liberty Cap supported by a pole which rests on Liberty's right shoulder. Liberty is facing left. The word LIBERTY is above the bust and the date below. The basic arrangement of the bust of Liberty with the word LIBERTY above and the date below continues until 1809. The border consists of dots arranged in a circular pattern. With the exception of the fact that Liberty is facing left, it could be stated that this design was copied for the third (Liberty Cap) design of the Large Cent of 1793.

There has been a great deal of speculation over the last 20 years as to who was the designer. The persons most frequently named are Joseph Wright and Adam Eckfeldt. Joseph Wright was an artist and engraver of some renown who was appointed the first Engraver of the Mint in the summer of 1793. However, he died on September 12th, 13th or 14th, 1793 from yellow fever. The probate of his estate included a claim for work done for engraving dies which have been identified as the "eagle on the globe" trial pieces for the Quarter Dollar. Joseph Wright's style as known from this trial piece is quite similar to Obverse 1 of 1793. This die was completed prior to July 18, 1793 as the first delivery of Half Cents to the Mint Treasurer was a few days later. Thus it is possible that Joseph Wright could have designed and cut the first obverse die.

Adam Eckfeldt's employment with the U.S. Mint's Coining Department appears to have started in late 1792 when he was 23 years old. He was given the title of Assistant to the Chief Coiner in 1796. In 1814, upon the death of Henry Voigt, he was named Chief Coiner from which he retired in 1839. He continued to be associated with the Mint in various capacities until his death in 1852. Adam Eckfeldt was not an artist, he was considered an expert machinist. It can be assumed that he would "try his hand" at engraving dies if

necessary, which seems to have occurred for both an obverse and two reverses of the Half Cent.

The reader should refer to the two obverses of 1793. The difference in style of these dies is remarkable. The most prominent feature is the bottom line of the bust on Obverse 1, it is even and graceful. On Obverse 2 the line is uneven and hooked due to an excessive amount of hair. The differences in the face and the pole for the Liberty Cap are also quite obvious. My conclusion is that Joseph Wright designed and prepared Obverse 1 and Adam Eckfeldt copied Joseph Wright's prior obverse due to the necessity for a die by the Mint.

Reverse. The legend UNITED STATES OF AMERICA surrounds a wreath of two leaved branches interlaced with lines of berries. The wreath is tied with a ribbon which has a single bow. The words HALF CENT are within the wreath. The fraction 1/200 is below the knot and within the ribbon ends. The border is a series of dots similar to the obverse. This design is a reduced version of the second (wreath) design of the One Cent Piece of 1793. This basic reverse design, like the obverse, continues until 1809.

The differences in style between the reverse dies indicate to me that Adam Eckfeldt copied Wright's Reverse A. Reverse B shows the "hand" of a copier, in the placing of legend distant from the rim and too close to the wreath. The dividing line of the fraction is faint and arced as if it were placed from the center dot. The numerals of the fraction are uneven. The large center dot indicates excessive use of the center point that an untrained "hand" would find necessary.

On Reverse C the layout of the legend and the resulting long stems and ribbon ends to fill in blank space again indicates the "hand" of a copier rather than that of an artist. Thus, as with the obverse die, the designer was Joseph Wright.

DIE PREPARATION The two obverse and three reverse dies used appear to have been pre-

pared by hand, using punches and gravers.

PLANCHETS These were rolled from sheet copper. I do not know of any 1793's which appear to have planchets made from defective Cents, which is prevalent in the years 1795-1802. The planchets which weigh about 104 grains are smaller and thicker than in 1794 and 1795 when the weight was the same.

The edge is lettered TWO HUNDRED FOR A DOLLAR followed by two leaves. The lettering was incused into the planchets by the use of a machine which was known at that time as a milling (Castaing) machine. This machine had two separate dies with raised letters. One die had the two leaves and the words TWO HUNDRED; the other die had the words FOR A DOLLAR. This machine was used for Half Cent edge lettering on all 1793 and 1794 specimens. It was also used on some 1795 specimens. I do not believe this machine was used to produce the gripped and lettered edge specimens of 1797 (Varieties #3b and #3c).

Occasionally a specimen will be seen with an overlap of lettering. As these errors are caused by improper operation of the milling machine, they will not be enumerated.

For many years it has been assumed that the edge lettering was always done on the planchets prior to being stamped by the coining dies. Close examination of uncirculated specimens seems to contradict this assumption a number of times. On some of these specimens edge letters are noted to break into the denticles of the obverse or reverse. This creates a lump that would have been flattened in the die striking of the planchet, if the edge had been lettered first. It is entirely possible that the edge letters could have been done first and those specimens which were not lettered prior to being fed into the coining press were lettered afterwards. Unfortunately, there is no written record known which states specifically when the edge lettering was done.

VARIETY #1



(ALVORD—DUPONT)



(Broken reverse)

Obverse 1 The "Even Bust Line" as mentioned in the section on Design Description. There are other differences to distinguish this die from obverse 2 but one must have both obverses together for comparison. As this is true of most dies, I shall only describe a main or diagnostic feature of each die. The feature which I describe will usually be visible even on a very worn specimen.

Reverse A Sixteen leaves on the right branch of the wreath. There is a dot after AMERICA and after CENT. The left stem touches the U in UNITED. This die becomes warped in the center so that HALF CENT is seldom visible on speci-

mens in less than Fine condition.

Die Breaks Reverse. The die rim chips at F of OF and runs to E in AMERICA. This causes a ridge of metal to be elevated above the plane of the coin.

Rarity 3 This Variety which is the first Half Cent struck does not seem to command a premium such as the first Large Cent (The Chain AMERI). This is probably due to the fact that there is not an easily identifiable feature to distinguish it from the others of the same date. Most specimens are in lower than Fine condition.

Condition Census UNC (1)—AUNC (4)—EF (8).

VARIETY #2



Obverse 1 The same as on Variety #1.

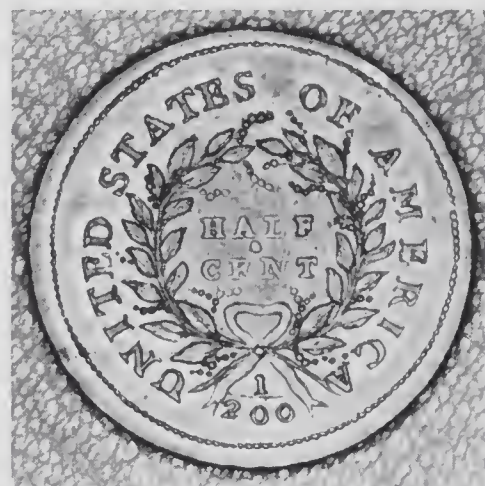
Reverse B Fifteen leaves on the right branch of the wreath. HALF CENT close together with a large center dot between these words.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 3 This is another coin which is usually seen in the lower grades of condition.

Condition Census UNC (1)—AUNC (5)—EF (4).

VARIETY #3



(WILLIAMS)

Obverse 2 The "Hooked Bust Line". The difference between the 1793 obverses once it is learned, no one should have any trouble determining which one is being looked at.

Reverse B The same as on Variety #2 but a later state of the die. Examples are known to exhibit

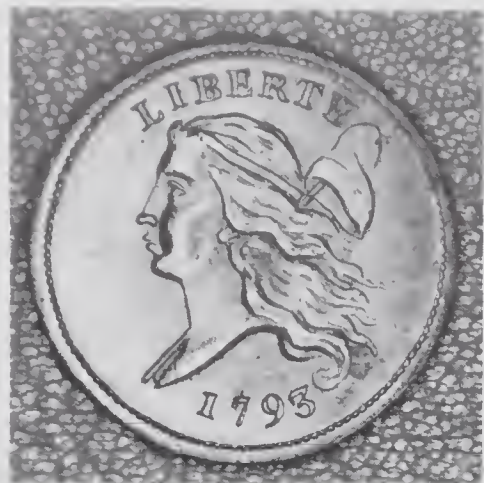
rust pits as explained on the next variety.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 3 While this variety is of about equal scarcity to Variety #2, it is more available in higher grades.

Condition Census UNC (2)—AUNC (4)—EF (8).

VARIETY #4



(SHOWERS)

(Defective
Planchet)

Obverse 2 The same as on Variety #3. On specimens in Extremely Fine or higher condition, occasionally there can be seen a myriad of tiny points in the fields of the coin. The cause of this is presumed to be rust on the die. As this occurs on other Half Cent dies a brief explanation follows.

The weather in Philadelphia then as now was usually very humid, particularly in the summer. Any die which was not used and did not have a thorough coat of oil or grease applied would probably rust in less than a week. If a die rusted and it was not deep, it could be used again, but the striking process would produce the reverse impression of the rust pits in the die on the coin. If the rust was deep, the die would have to be reworked and case-hardened again as the reworking would remove some of the original case-hardening. The marks on a coin caused by die rust will disappear after a very limited amount of circulation of a coin. It should also be kept in mind that the copper used in the early years sometimes appears to be granular when viewed with a magnifier. This applies regardless of the condition of the coin, so that a coin in Extremely Fine or higher condition

can exhibit both rust pits and granulation which can be told apart only after considerable experience at viewing coins.

Reverse C Thirteen leaves on the **left** branch of the wreath. This is the only 1793 reverse with this number of leaves on the left branch. Another feature is the very long stems of the wreath which do not touch or even come close to any letter of the legend. The letter H in HALF has been repunched to strengthen it. This feature is not visible on specimens in the lower grades of condition.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 3 A number of specimens of this Variety are seen struck on defective planchets such as illustrated above. The cause of the missing metal is the improper preparation of the copper in the casting and rolling processes. This imperfection is also seen on Large Cents presumably made about the same time. (Sheldon No.s 11c, 12 and 15)

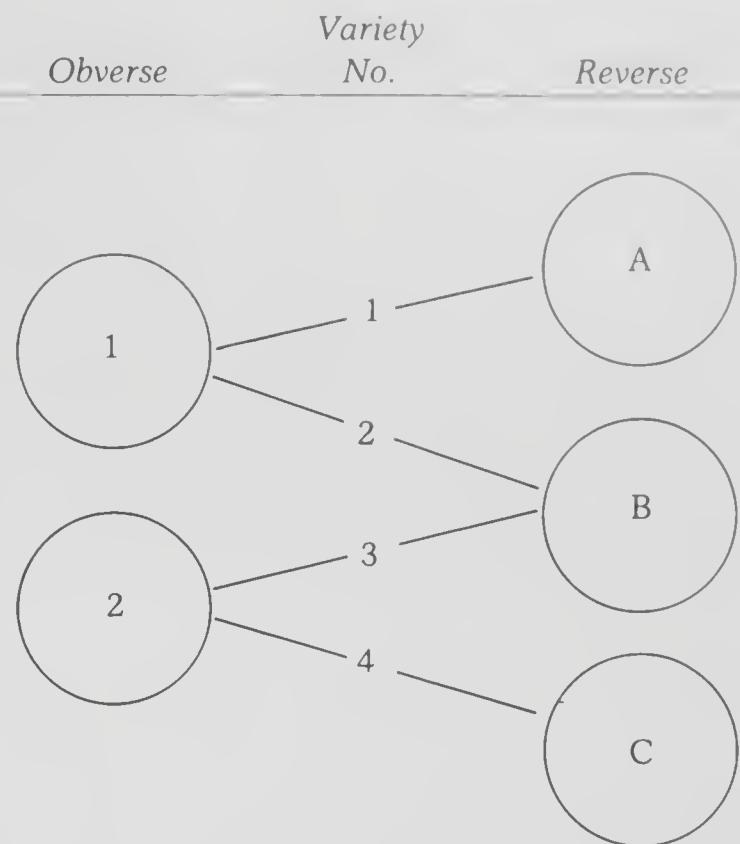
It should be noted that few specimens of this Variety are seen in Very Fine or Fine condition. The majority are in Good or lower condition.

Condition Census UNC (3)—AUNC (3)—EF (3).

KEYS TO VARIETIES

Examine obverse and classify:

- A. "Even Bust Line". Examine Reverse.
 a. 16 leaves on right branch of wreath is #1.
 b. 15 leaves on right branch of wreath. Large center dot is #2.
- B. "Hooked Bust Line". Examine Reverse.
 a. 15 leaves on right branch of wreath. Large center dot is #3.
 b. 13 leaves on **left** branch of wreath is #4.

1793
EMISSION SEQUENCE

GENERAL COMMENTS

The coinage for this year has been given in two amounts: 31,934 and 35,334. The difference of 3,400 is apparently due to an error made in 1799 when the Mint compiled a statement of deliveries. This statement was then copied in later years and then copies made from the copies, etc. The correct coinage is 35,334. This information was first published by Frank H. Stewart in 1924 in "History of the First United States Mint". It was confirmed by research in The National Archives, after the Archives completed its preliminary inventory of Record Group #104. A number of years ago I found in the Archives a further report dated November 24, 1796 which also confirms the coinage of 35,334.

Deliveries of this coinage were all in the quarter ending September 30, and were in the following amounts:

7,000
24,934
<u>3,400</u>
<u>35,334</u>

Specimens of this date are high priced. This is attributed to demand caused by the fact that the design was only used in this year.

DESIGN DESCRIPTION Obverse. Liberty has now turned her head and is facing right. She has also shifted the pole which supports her Liberty Cap to her left shoulder. This design has been attributed to Robert Scot, who was appointed Engraver of the Mint on November 23, 1793. The Cent of the year is a larger edition of this design. The border of the Half Cent has also been changed to denticles.

Reverse. The same basic design as the prior year except that the lines of berries from the wreath have been replaced by single berries on the wreath. The single ribbon bow has been replaced with a double bow. The border consists of denticles.

DIE PREPARATION Hubs are used for the first time this year to prepare obverse and reverse dies. A total of 5 obverse and 5 reverse dies were used. Three of each were prepared from hubs and two of each were prepared with punches and a graver.

Obverse. The hub had the bust of Liberty, the Liberty Cap, and the Pole to the bust. After this was punched in the die, the engraver punched the numerals and letters necessary, cut the denticles

and strengthened various details on the die. When the dies were prepared without a hub, the engraver had to cut and punch the entire design by hand.

Reverse. The hub had the wreath, the words UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, the ribbon, stem ends and the words HALF CENT. The engraver punched the berries, and the numerals of the fraction. He then cut the denticles and strengthened various places. The hand-cut dies are of an entirely different style and closely resemble the dies used on Cents.

PLANCHETS The use of planchets made from sheet copper seems to continue through this year.

The planchets are the same weight as 1793 (approximately 104 grains) but are wider and thinner. The edge is lettered TWO HUNDRED FOR A DOLLAR followed by a single leaf. The lettering is in two styles, large and small. On Varieties #1 through #6 both styles are used. Varieties #7 through #9 are known only with small style edge lettering.

VARIETY #1a



(Unclashed Die)



(Clashed Die)



(RYDER)

Obverse 1 "The High Head". The head which is hand cut is closer to LIBERTY than the date. The numerals 1, 7 and 9 are repunched. They are shallow, small and widely spaced. On many worn specimens they cannot be seen. The denticles are small. Clash marks of the wreath can be seen occasionally from the nose to the neck of Liberty. These marks are caused by having the dies come together without a planchet and will produce a reverse impression on the opposite die when it strikes later coins.

Reverse A This die was made with the hub; however, the impression of the hub was not as deep as on later reverses. As a result of this, the branches of the wreath have 15 leaves each. Each branch has 4 berries. The first inside berry on the left branch of the wreath is attached to the left side of the first inside leaf and is very small. It does not have a stem. The 2 in the denominator is higher than the zeroes. On specimens higher than Fine condition, a die clash in the form of a ridge can be seen running from M in AMERICA to the border. Additional clash marks of the obverse die

can be seen to the left of H and to the right of F in HALF on some specimens.

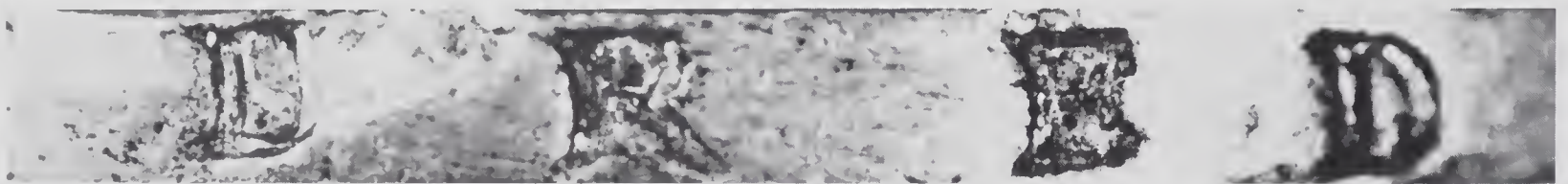
Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 3 Usually seen in less than Very Fine condition. A number of specimens appear to have not been struck with full detail. This is caused by not using full strength on the hand operated coin press. It is presumed that the Mint did this to prolong the life of the dies. Collectors are cautioned that there is a term in collecting jargon known as a "Soft Strike" which is used to describe the above situation. Many persons who sell coins use the term "Soft Strike" to, in effect, upgrade their merchandise i.e. sell at a higher price. Certain varieties of Half Cent of which this is one, have soft strikes but collectors should be sure that such is the case before believing the description, "Very Fine but a soft strike". When, in fact, the coin is just one that is barely in Good condition.

This variety has large edge letters to distinguish it from the next variety.

Condition Census AUNC (6)—EF (9).

VARIETY #1b



(Small Edge Letters)

Note space between R and E of HUNDRED

Obverse 1 The same as Variety #1a.

Reverse A The same as Variety #1a.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 6 This variety has small edge letters which is the usual style seen on 1794's.

As of this writing 12 specimens are known to

me compared to 6 ten years ago. I am reasonably sure that not all specimens have been reported and more will be found, hence the rarity of this variety has been lowered to 6.

Condition Census VF (2)—F (2)—VG (3).

VARIETY #2a



(Unclashed Die)
(RYDER)



(Clashed Die)



(RYDER)

Obverse 2 This obverse has its head punched from the hub. The diagnostic feature of this die is the date. The numeral 1 is high and distant from the 7, so that the 7 appears to be low. Clash marks of the reverse die are often seen in front of the chin and neck of Liberty.

Reverse B This die was made from the hub and has 15 leaves on each branch. On specimens in Very Fine condition or higher, an additional leaf

can be seen on each side of HALF. There are 5 berries on the left branch of the wreath and 4 on the right branch. The numerator of the fraction touches the left ribbon.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 2 Tied with Variety #9 for the most common 1794, it is often seen in worn condition.

This variety has small edge letters.

Condition Census AUNC (3)—EF (2)—VF (8).

VARIETY #2b

Obverse 2 The same as Variety #2a.

Reverse B The same as Variety #2a.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 6 This variety has large edge letters as is seen on Variety #1a.

The differences in edge letters on the 1794's seem to have been first published by the "Numismatist" in the November 1921 issue. Commodore W.C. Eaton, in a long article mentions many different Half Cents that he owned. A great many of the specimens he describes are merely striking variations that are now known. Apparently he did not classify his coins such as I have done in this

book. The sale of the F.R. Alvord Collection in 1924 seems to have established the fact that the 1794's had two styles of edge letters. Commodore Eaton's observations seemed to have been forgotten. In the Alvord sale only two varieties were described as having variations in edge lettering. (Varieties #1b and #2b). In the period 1973 to 1976 four additional varieties were discovered to have both styles of edge letters. Two of these were actually rediscoveries as they had been mentioned by Commodore Eaton in his 1921 articles.

Currently (1981) there are 12 specimens known to me compared to 4 in 1971.

Condition Census EF (1)—G (6)—FR (5).



(Large Edge Letters)

Note space between R and E of HUNDRED

VARIETY #3a



(MILLS)



Obverse 3 The second of the dies prepared with the head hub. The date is unevenly spaced with the 7 and 9 close. The border denticles are the same width as the space between them. The 4 of the date is distant from the bust.

Reverse D The die is cut by hand and is of the same style as the Cent. To the right of T in CENT there is a pair of leaves in a vertical position. The left branch of the wreath has fourteen leaves and 6 berries. The right branch has eighteen leaves and 6 berries.

Die Breaks None known. Clash marks that were not removed are always seen on this Variety. Refer to section on Die Breaks for Variety #5a for description.

Rarity 5 Seldom available in any condition other than very worn. This Variety has small edge letters.

Condition Census AUNC (1)—VF (3)—F (4).

VARIETY #3b

Obverse 3 The same as Variety #3a.

Reverse D The same as Variety #3a.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 8 Two specimens are known at the pres-

ent time. The first specimen was discovered by Richard H. Gross in January 1975. This Variety has large edge letters.

Condition Census F (1)—VG (1).

VARIETY #4a



(Early Die State)



(Late Die State)



Obverse 4 The head hub was used for the last time on this die. The main feature is the date, in which the 9 is low in relation to the other numerals.

Reverse D The same as Varieties #3a and #3b.

Die Breaks Obverse. There is a bulge from the Liberty Cap to the border, left of 1 in the date. I believe the bulge is due to warping of the die in the hardening process and the subsequent use of the die. There are clash marks which will be seen on most specimens, particularly when the coin being examined is a late die state.

Reverse. A break starts at the rim above D of UNITED and runs through the letter. The break continues on some specimens through the top of STATES to O of OF. There are numerous clash marks which are sometimes mistaken for die breaks. The most noticeable are the reverse impressions of the Liberty Cap, the pole and the point of the bust.

Rarity 3 Another coin which is usually worn and difficult to obtain in Very Fine or higher condition. This Variety has small edge letters.

Condition Census UNC (3)—AUNC (2)—EF (6).

VARIETY #4b

Obverse 4 The same as Variety #4a.

Reverse D The same as Variety #4a.

Die Breaks None known. The two specimens known are early obverse die states with light clash marks but before the bulge develops.

Rarity 8 Two specimens are known at the present time. The first specimen was identified by W.K. Raymond in October 1973. As with Variety

#5b, it was a rediscovery since this Variety had been mentioned by Commodore Eaton in his 1921 article in the "Numismatist." It is not known whether Commodore Eaton's specimen is among the specimens now known. This Variety has large edge letters.

Condition Census F (1)—VG (1).

VARIETY #5a



(SHOWERS)



Obverse 3 The same as Variety #3 but in an earlier state. On this Variety the obverse is usually seen in an unclashed state.

Reverse C The third and last die from the hub. The sixteenth leaf on each branch can usually be seen. On the right branch of the wreath, the extra leaf is attached to the fourth inside leaf and points to F in HALF. On the left branch, it is just a partial leaf to the right of the fourth inside leaf, and is parallel to H in HALF. The left branch of the wreath has 5 berries and the right branch has 6. There are 2 berries on the right branch of the wreath that do not show on any of the other hub-prepared reverses. One berry is below F in OF. The other one is below the left foot of the first A in AMERICA.

Die Breaks Obverse. None known. There are clash marks visible on some specimens which are mistaken for die breaks. The Mint removed the clash marks from the field in front of Liberty's face but did not remove them in the area of the Liberty Cap Pole, nor in the letter B of LIBERTY. These marks remained with this die in subsequent use with two other reverse dies. (Varieties #3 and #6)

Rarity 4 Usually seen in worn condition. This die combination seems to have been arbitrarily interrupted as the reverse die will reappear after another reverse is used with the obverse die. This Variety has small edge letters.

Condition Census UNC (1)—AUNC (1)—EF (1)—VF (13).

VARIETY #5b

Obverse 3 The same as Variety #5a.

Reverse C The same as Variety #5a.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 8 Presently known by one specimen which was discovered by W. K. Raymond in August 1975. Actually it is a rediscovery as this

Variety was mentioned by Commodore W. C. Eaton in his 1921 article in the "Numismatist." It is not known if this is the specimen referred to by Commodore Eaton. This Variety has large edge letters.

Condition Census VF (1).

VARIETY #6a



(ALVORD)



Obverse 3 The same as used on Variety #3 and #5, but always seen with clash marks.

Reverse E This is a hand-cut die which is the same style as reverse D. The diagnostic feature is the first inside pair of leaves on the right branch. These leaves are directly below T of CENT.

Die Breaks Obverse. There is a bulge which

develops to the right of the 4 of the date and connects the bust of Liberty to the rim below it.

Rarity 6 Another short-lived die combination. Most specimens are seen in very worn condition. This Variety has small edge letters.

Conditions Census F (5)—VG (5).

VARIETY #6b

Obverse 3 The same as Variety #6a.

Reverse E The same as Variety #6a.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 8 Presently known by a single specimen that was discovered by W. K. Raymond in October 1976. This coin can be traced to a 1963 sale of

a known collection (Lahrman). It was thought for many years to be one of the higher grade specimens of what is now Variety #6a. This Variety has large edge letters.

Condition Census F (1).

VARIETY #7



Obverse 5 This die is noted for its high relief of the hair. On Fine condition specimens the hair will exhibit large flat areas where the coin has worn. The 4 of the date almost touches the bust of Liberty.

Reverse E The same as used on Varieties #6a and #6b.

Die Breaks Reverse. A crack begins at the left border and passes through E of UNITED, two outside leaves, the branch of the wreath, an inside

leaf, and the top of H in HALF. This crack terminates in the field above the last mentioned letter. All specimens I have seen have this break.

Rarity 5 This Variety was considered for many years to be the scarcest die combination variety of 1794. When the First Edition of the book was written, there were 14 specimens known. As of this writing there are 28 known to me. Undoubtedly more will be found.

Condition Census UNC (2)—EF (2)—VF (6).

VARIETY #8



(SHOWERS)



(Broken Die)

Obverse 5 The same as Variety #7.

Reverse C The same as Variety #5.

Die Breaks Reverse. There is a line break from the border to the wreath passing through the second T in STATES. There are also clash marks that can be mistaken for die breaks. The most noticeable is the point of the bust.

Rarity 5 This is another Variety which has been identified in comparatively large numbers since the publication of the First Edition. It is now in the mid range of Rarity 5 with about 45 specimens estimated to be extant. Most of the new specimens, however, are in the lower grades of condition. This Variety has a peculiarity in its

striking in that the reverse is usually off center towards the lower right. This results in a large rim at the upper left. Since the obverse does not exhibit this feature, it can be determined that the reverse die was not properly aligned during the striking process.

As mentioned in the comments on Variety #9, the differences between Varieties #8 and #9 are minute. This evidently led to the fact that this Variety was not identified until sometime between 1908 and 1915. The discoverer is not known to me.

Condition Census EF (2)—VF (3)—F (6).

VARIETY #9



(ALLENBURGER)



Obverse 5 The same as Variety #7.

Reverse B The same as Varieties #2a and #2b.

Die Breaks Obverse. A break begins at the left border opposite half-way between the top and bottom of the Liberty Cap. This crack runs downward through the Liberty Cap to the hair. Another crack develops over the top of the letters IBERTY of LIBERTY.

Reverse. Rim crumbles below the denominator of the fraction.

Rarity 2 One of the two common Varieties of this date. The dies used on this Variety result in the obverse being stronger than the reverse. In

lower grades of condition the reverse is very weak and on higher condition specimens split grades are sometimes used for grading.

The difference from Variety #8 is only the berries in the wreath and the placing of the numbers of the fraction. It should also be noted in distinguishing Variety #9 from Variety #8 that on Variety #9, the reverse is USUALLY centered on the planchet while on Variety #8 it is usually not centered. This feature is not diagnostic and cannot be used on very low grade coins.

Condition Census UNC (3)—AUNC (2)—EF (4).

KEYS TO VARIETIES

Examine obverse and classify:

- A. High head with low date is #1. Large edge lettering is #1a. Small edge lettering is #1b.
- B. Large head with 1 high and 7 low is #2. Small edge lettering is #2a. Large edge lettering is #2b.
- C. Large head with 7 high and 9 low is #4. Small edge lettering is #4a. Large edge lettering is #4b.
- D. Large head with 7 and 9 close. The 4 of date is distant from bust.

Examine reverse:

- a. Left branch of wreath ends in a single leaf. Two leaves under T of CENT. Small edge lettering is #6a. Large edge lettering is #6b.
- b. Left branch of wreath ends in a single leaf. Two leaves to right of T in CENT.

Small edge lettering is #3a. Large edge lettering is #3b.

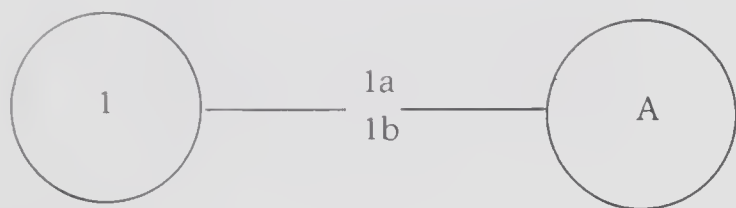
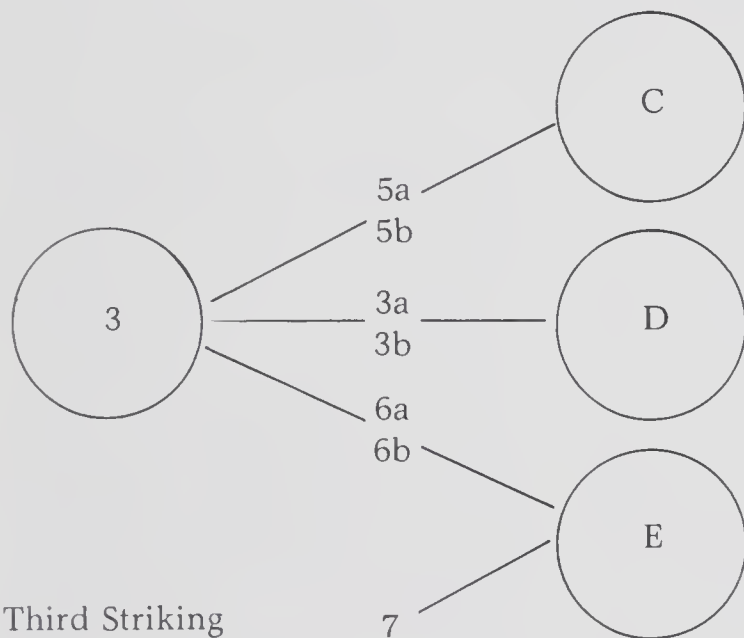
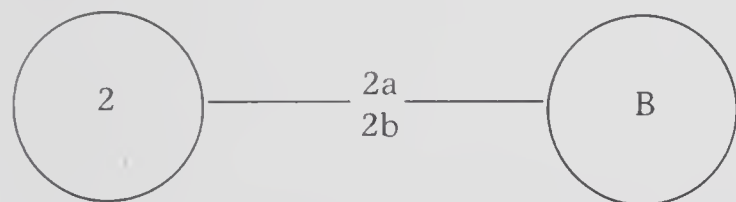
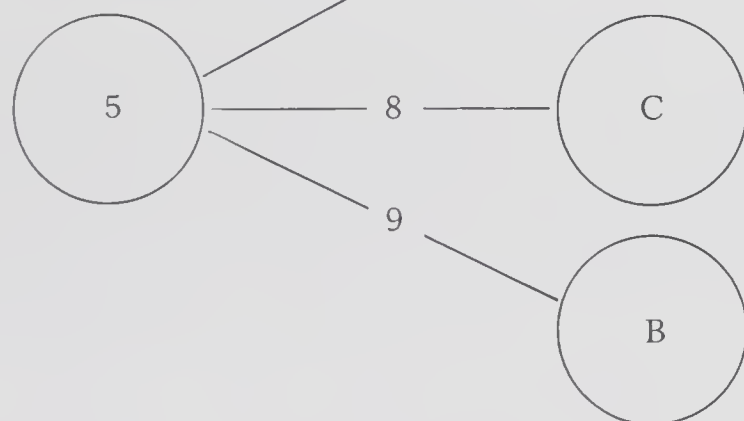
- c. Left branch of wreath ends in a pair of leaves. Berry in wreath below F of OF. Small edge lettering is #5a. Large edge lettering is #5b.
- E. Head with high hair relief. The 4 of date almost touches bust.

Examine reverse:

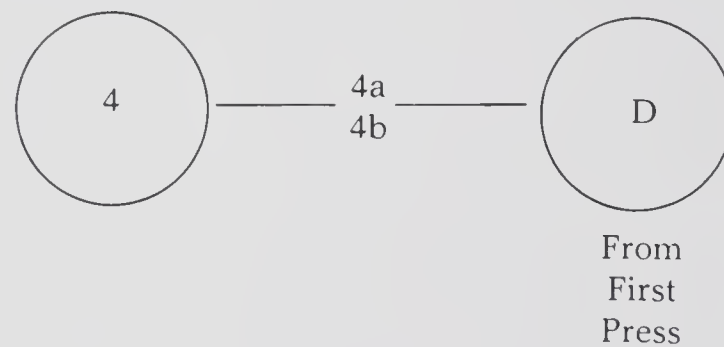
- a. Left branch of wreath ends in a pair of leaves. Berry in wreath below F of OF is #8.
- b. Left branch of wreath ends in a pair of leaves. Numerator of fraction touches left ribbon is #9.
- c. Left branch of wreath ends in a single leaf. Two leaves under T of CENT is #7.

 1794
 EMISSION SEQUENCE

<i>Obverse</i>	<i>Variety No.</i>	<i>Reverse</i>
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First Striking
Second Striking
First Press
Third Striking

<i>Obverse</i>	<i>Variety No.</i>	<i>Reverse</i>
----------------	------------------------	----------------

Second Press

GENERAL COMMENTS

The coinage for the year as reported is 81,600, which were delivered as follows:

First Quarter	10,000
Second Quarter	48,000
Third Quarter	23,600

The minting of the Half Cent was apparently done when the coining presses were not minting Cents. There were 918,521 Cents minted in this year and were struck from 63 different die combinations.

In preparing the Emission Sequence, I have assumed that the first striking corresponds to the delivery of 10,000 for the first quarter. The second striking seems to have occurred on two coining presses, but I do not believe that the 48,000 delivered in the second quarter are the total of the second striking. Apparently some of the third striking are included in this total.

It is interesting to note that the third striking reverse dies are all ones that were used previously and are combined with a new hand-cut obverse die. This indicates that the Mint had been saving dies which were serviceable for a time when they might be used.

The emission sequence has been revised from

the First Edition, but the numbering of the Varieties has remained the same. The reason for this change is that Variety #5 exists without clash marks and Variety #3 is always seen with them. Thus I believe that Variety #5 was struck before Variety #3.

It should be remembered that the emission sequence set forth for all dates in this edition is a presumed one. As time goes on the emission sequence may change based on future discoveries.

It is the author's opinion that there is a possible missing Variety in this year. It has been noted that Obverse 2 is often seen with reverse clash marks, but the reverse die does not show clash marks. Obverse 1 is occasionally seen in an unclashed state combined with a slightly clashed Reverse A. This could indicate that there is an unidentified hub prepared reverse struck with Obverse 1 or 2, or Obverse 1 was struck with Reverse B, or Obverse 2 was struck with Reverse A. Reverse dies A and B were made from a hub. (see section on 1794 die preparation) and the differences are minute. There are no known die breaks on any of the two obverses or reverses used to indicate the final use of a die. To those of us who are interested, this presents an enigma that hopefully will be answered in the future.

1795

DESIGN DESCRIPTION Obverse. Liberty with cap. This design has been attributed to John Smith Gardner, Assistant Engraver to Robert Scot. This is the same general design as the preceding year but the bust of Liberty is much smaller. This design was used on 1795, 1796 and 1797 dated coins. Gardner held the position of Assistant Engraver from November 1794 to April 1796.

Reverse. The design is similar to the preceding year but has some differences. This design is used through the first die of 1802.

DIE PREPARATION A hub was used to punch in the bust of Liberty and Liberty cap on the obverse die. The engraver then punched in the letters LIBERTY, the numerals of the date, the pole to the bust, and the denticles which show on the border.

The reverse die evidently was not prepared from a hub, as was done on some of the 1794 reverses. The method of preparation appears to be the use of punches and the graver. Eight different dies were prepared by this method and used in the years 1795 to 1802.

PLANCHETS The weight of the planchet was officially changed from 104 grains to 84 grains, but the weights vary from 77 grains to 118 grains on those which are supposed to weigh 84 grains. There are lesser variations on those which are supposed to weigh 104 grains.

The change in weight was done in accordance with an Act of Congress dated March 3, 1795.

The use of planchets made from rolled-out Talbot Allum & Lee cents starts with this year's dated coinage. These were used on Variety #6a. Parts of the design of the Talbot Allum & Lee cents may usually be seen on these coins.

The edge is lettered TWO HUNDRED FOR A DOLLAR followed by a leaf on those coins which were supposed to weigh 104 grains. The size of the edge letters used on 1795 dated specimens is different from the previous years. The letters are similar to the large style used in early 1794. The edge is plain on those which were supposed to weigh 84 grains.

VARIETY #1



(MILLS—WILLIAMS)



Obverse 1 The numeral 1 of the date is made from the punch for the letter I in LIBERTY.

Reverse A Seventeen leaves and four berries on the left branch of the wreath, sixteen leaves and four berries on the right branch of the wreath. There is a berry on each side of the bow.

Die Breaks None known. All specimens seen exhibit a die preparation error in the denticles on the reverse. There is a lump on two denticles

between the letters E and D of UNITED. This is caused by a depression in the die which in turn produces the lump on the struck coin.

Rarity 2 Tied for the second most common 1795. This coin is known as the Lettered Edge with Pole 1795. One specimen that was in the Brobston Collection was struck on a light weight planchet but has the lettered edge.

Condition Census UNC (5)—AUNC (8).

VARIETY #2a



(Defective Planchet)

Obverse 2 The diagnostic feature of the die is the comma-like mark between the 1 and 7 of the date.

Reverse A Same die as on Variety #1 except it is now warped at AMER of AMERICA.

Die Breaks The reverse warping is sometimes referred to as a break.

Rarity 3 Another well-known 1795 variety, the Punctuated Date with Lettered Edge. This variety

is the last one struck with the standard weight of 104 grains. In August 1974 Jon Lusk discovered a specimen of this variety on which the edge lettering had been omitted. As of this writing the coin is unique. I do not consider it a new variety as it is merely an omission of one step in preparation of the coin.

Condition Census UNC (1)—AUNC (3)—EF (4).

VARIETY #2b

Obverse 2 The Punctuated Date.

Reverse A Berry on each side of bow. Warped at AMER of AMERICA.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 6 The same die combination as on Vari-

ety #2a but struck on a thin (84 grain) planchet. The rarest of three varieties known as Punctuated Date with Plain Edge.

Condition Census UNC (1)—AUNC (1)—VF (1)—F (4).

VARIETY #3



(BROBSTON—SHOWERS)



Obverse 2 The Punctuated Date.

Reverse B Left branch of the wreath has 5 berries instead of 4 as on reverse A. The right branch has 4 berries, with one on each side of the wreath branch below the first A in AMERICA. This die is warped at ALF ENT making these letters impossible to read after a limited amount of circulation of a coin.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 5 This variety can be obtained unattributed if one carefully examines all Punctuated Date with Plain Edge 1795's offered.

Condition Census EF (2)—VF (2)—F (4).

VARIETY #4



(Defective Planchet)

(Off Center Strike)



Obverse 2 The Punctuated Date. On many specimens of this variety, a large bulge is present at the border opposite Liberty's face.

Reverse C There are no berries on either side of the bow. This can be noticed even on very worn specimens. The die is warped at STA of STATES.

Die Breaks Reverse. Very early in the life of this die a crack develops from the first T of STATES to the wreath and diagonally through the F of HALF and the right branch of the wreath to R in AMERICA. This crack is not well defined on this variety but the die sinking caused by it usually makes the words HALF CENT impossible to read on coins in less than Fine condition.

Rarity 3 This is the last of the Punctuated Date with Plain Edge 1795's and is the most plentiful. The striking and the planchets used on this variety produce a problem in grading. Both the

obverse and reverse dies were weak. The obverse had become concave which resulted in a very weak strike of the bust. The reverse die had broken. The quality of the planchets was inferior in that the copper is brittle and poorly rolled. This produced planchet defects which are commonly seen on this variety. In high grades of condition, the centers of both the obverse and reverse are weak and poorly defined. On some high grade specimens a series of small scratches can be seen in the centers. These are presumed to be marks which were on the planchet after the rolling process and were not flattened in the striking process. In grading these coins, allowances must be made for the factors mentioned above. This variety is sometimes referred to as the "Chicken Scratches Variety."

Condition Census UNC (1)—AUNC (4)—EF (4).

VARIETY #5a



(WILLIAMS)



(Early Use)

(BROBSTON)

Obverse 3 This die is easily noticed as the pole, which runs from the neck of the bust of Liberty to the border, is missing. The die appears to be obverse 1 which has been altered and rehardened. The date area is slightly warped, causing the 5 to be faint on Fine Condition specimens and, in the lower conditions, it is missing.

Reverse C The same die as used on Variety #4. However, in its early use it is more clearly impressed than in the final state of Variety #4. The replacement of the obverse with a die that was not concave caused this die to make better strikings. However, the replacement obverse

causes this reverse to break again and eventually be discarded.

Die Breaks Reverse. In addition to the break mentioned on Variety #4 another break develops from the dot-like defect between the letter D of UNITED and the first S of STATES; to a leaf in the wreath; through the wreath stem and to a berry where it becomes a line crack, paralleling the previous break and ends in the F of HALF.

Rarity 3 Struck on a thin planchet weighing approximately 84 grains.

Condition Census AUNC (3)—EF (5).

VARIETY #5b



(Over Large Cent)



Obverse 3 No pole to bust.

Reverse C No berries on each side of bow.

Die Breaks As on #5a.

Rarity 4 Struck on a thick planchet weighing approximately 115 grains. The source of these planchets and those used on Variety #6b which are similar has been questioned for many years. When I wrote the First Edition of this work I had

no direct evidence of any source. Since that time four specimens have come to my attention that are overstruck on spoiled Large Cents. This is now confirmed by records in The National Archives dated December 24, 1795 and March 9, 1796.

Condition Census UNC (1)—AUNC (2)—EF (3)—VF (6).

VARIETY #6a



(Talbot Allum & Lee Planchet)

Obverse 3 No pole to bust.**Reverse D** One berry to the left of the bow and none to the right. The left branch of the wreath has 18 leaves and 3 berries.**Die Breaks** None known.**Rarity 2** Struck on a thin planchet. Most, if not all, specimens are struck over Talbot Allum & Lee cents. Parts of the designs of these tokens are visible. There are two specimens known of this variety which are overstruck on planchets made from

copper trial pieces prepared by the Mint. One of these is struck over a 1794 Half Dollar and the other one on a 1795 Half Dollar.

This Variety is usually seen with the reverse much stronger than the obverse. The reason is that the obverse die is more shallow than the reverse die. As no breaks develop the striking of these coins is quite consistent and grading should reflect the differences in the obverse and reverse.

Condition Census UNC (2)—AUNC (7).

VARIETY #6b

Obverse 3 No pole to bust.**Reverse D** One berry to the left of the bow.**Die Breaks** None known.**Rarity 6** Struck on a thick planchet such as

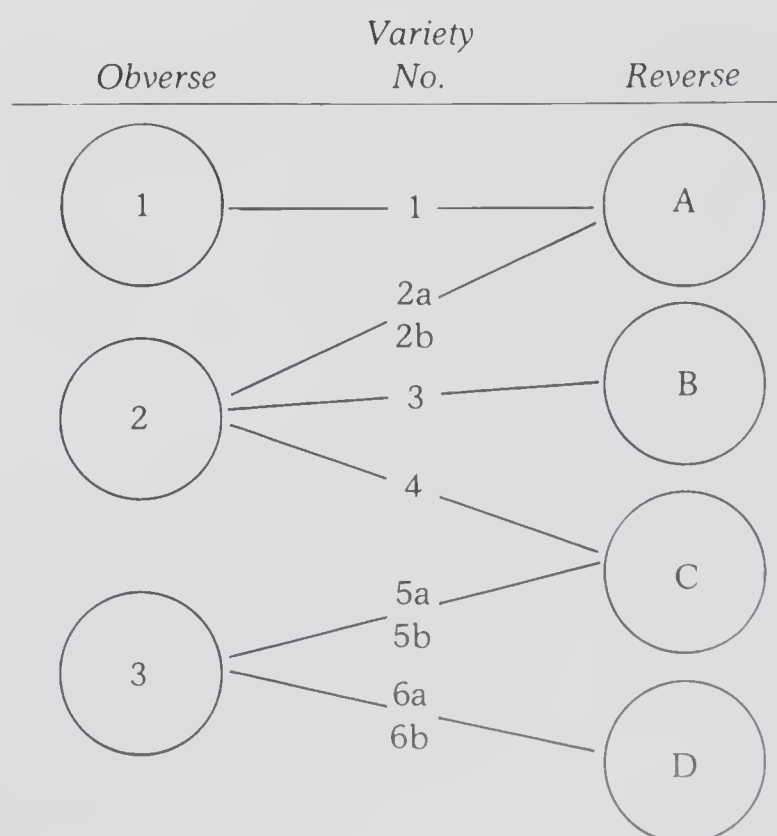
described for Variety #5b. Discovered by the author in 1953. There are eighteen known to me presently.

Condition Census F (4)—VG (3).

KEYS TO VARIETIES

Examine obverse and classify:

- A. Pole to bust. Date not punctuated. Reverse with berry on each side of bow is #1.
- B. No pole to bust. Examine reverse.
- No berries on each side of bow. #5a is on a thin planchet. #5b is on a thick planchet.
 - One berry to left of bow and none on right. #6a is on a thin planchet. #6b is on a thick planchet.
- C. Punctuated Date. Pole to bust. Examine reverse.
- No berries on each side of bow is #4.
 - Berries on each side of bow:
 - Five berries on left branch is #3.
 - Four berries on left branch. #2a is on a thick planchet and has a lettered edge. #2b is on a thin planchet and has a plain edge.

1795
EMISSION SEQUENCE



(Talbot Allum
& Lee token)

GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage for the calendar year is 25,600. These are apparently some of the Lettered Edge specimens which were delivered by the Coiner on December 5, 1795 to the Treasurer. On December 28, 1795 the Mint began coinage of Cents weighing 168 grains, in accordance with an Act of Congress dated March 3, 1795. This Act reduced the Half Cent weight to 84 grains. Half Cent deliveries by the Coiner in 1796 were as follows:

To February 28	60,000
March 12	2,000
March 18	32,000
March 21	15,000
April 19	3,350
June 8	1,740
October 14 (date of warrant)	1,390

It is my opinion that all coins delivered through June 8 were dated 1795. This results in a presumed 1795 dated coinage of 139,690.

The National Archives has accounting records with the following entries which explain the source of some planchets.

"December 24, 1795 Cents spoiled & clipt returned—14 lbs., 15 dwt—most of these wair maid 1/2 cents"

"March 9, 1796. There was 33 lb of spoiled cents maid in 1/2 cents & weighed again"

The source of the Talbot Allum & Lee tokens appear to be the purchase by the Mint on April 23, 1795 of 1,076 lbs. of these tokens. The Mint

appears to have been trying to find a cheap or expeditious way to obtain copper for striking Large Cents. Congress had authorized the reduced weight Large Cent on March 3, 1795. There are two known Large Cents struck over Talbot Allum & Lee tokens both use a 1795 obverse die. (S-75 & NC-2) There are no records to indicate the outcome of this experiment other than the scarcity of Talbot Allum & Lee undertypes on Large Cents. In October 1795 Mint Director Henry W. DeSausure resigned after holding the office for less than four months. In his report he stated that there was no copper on hand fit for coinage, which seems to indicate the official thinking in regard to the purchase of Talbot Allum & Lee tokens. On November 27, 1795 the Assayer, Albion Cox or Coxe, both spellings occur, died which caused the Mint to cease gold and silver coinage. The new Director of The Mint, Elias Boudinot, resumed copper coinage until another assayer could be employed.

Finally, in March 1796, it appears that the Mint, in order to use up the approximately 50,000 Talbot Allum & Lee tokens on hand, merely put them through the same rolling and cutting process to produce Half Cent planchets that they were using for spoiled Large Cents. Evidently the making of Half Cent planchets from Talbot Allum & Lee tokens was considered a success as before the year 1796 closed, the Mint made another purchase of these tokens.

1796

DESIGN DESCRIPTION Identical to 1795.

DIE PREPARATION Identical to 1795.

PLANCHETS All specimens are struck on planchets which were accounted for by the Mint in an entry in the Account Book of the Mint's Treasurer, dated August 12, 1796 which stated "weight of ½ Cents in planchets 16 lb. 13 oz." This amounts to, by weight, 1401 planchets. Many of

these planchets were of very low grade copper which resulted, after a limited amount of circulation, in coins with a pitted surface. One specimen of Variety #2 has been identified as being struck over a Large Cent and weighs approximately 110 grains. It is similar to the planchets used on 1795 Varieties #5b and #6b.

All known specimens have plain edges.

VARIETY #1



(DUPONT)



Obverse 1 This die was not completed in that the pole from the neck to the rim was not punched or cut. This die is similar in appearance to obverse 3 of 1795 but the reason for the missing pole is different. Contrary to the 1795 no pole die, the date is very strong on this die.

Reverse A The diagnostic feature of this die is the triple set of leaves to the right of F in HALF. There are 18 leaves and 4 berries on the left branch, and 16 leaves and 3 berries on the right branch.

Die Breaks Obverse. Every specimen I have seen or viewed in a photograph has a horizontal break from the left border at 9 o'clock, through the bust of Liberty, to the right border at 2:30 o'clock.

Rarity 6 Considered to be the rarest Half Cent when it comes to price. This is due to its publicity among coin collectors for over 100 years.

One of the most frequently asked questions I have answered is "How do you tell the difference between a 1795 and 1796 no pole when no date is visible?" The best answer is to look on the reverse. On the 1796 the lowest outside leaf on the right points directly to the C in AMERICA and there is a berry to the left of the bow tying the wreath. The two reverses used with the no pole obverse in 1795 do not exhibit *both* of these features of the 1796 reverse. On reverse C of 1795, the leaf points to C in AMERICA but there is no berry to the left of the bow. On reverse D of 1795, there is a berry to the left of the bow but the lowest outside leaf on the right points to a foot of A in AMERICA. To date every coin which I have examined has been a 1795 but maybe someday someone will be successful in finding a 1796.

Condition Census UNC (3)—F (2)—VG (3).

VARIETY #2



(DUPONT)



Obverse 2 Die has a pole to the bust of Liberty. Early in its use the die became warped and produced a bulge to the left of the bust.

Reverse A As on Variety #1.

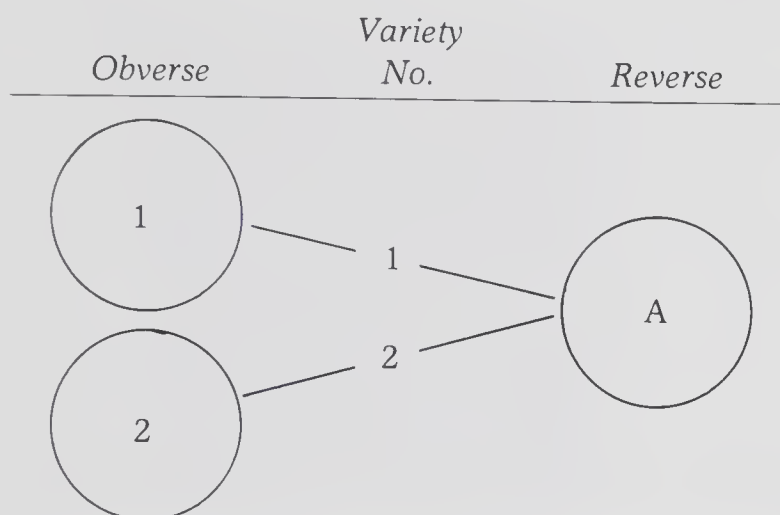
Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 4 Another well-publicized rarity. As date collecting developed very early, the rarity of this coin was known.

Condition Census UNC (7).

1796

EMISSION SEQUENCE



KEYS TO VARIETIES

Examine the obverse and classify:

A. No pole to bust is #1.

B. Pole to bust is #2.

A word of caution. Be on the alert for electrotypes and other copies. Electrotypes were considered acceptable as facsimilies by collectors until about 1920. These can be identified by their imperfections in manufacture and a lack of ring when tapped. Casts also exist which usually have no ring. In his monograph, "United States Cents and Half Cents", Ed. Frossard on page 41 also mentions struck copies. As this work was published in 1879, the problem of forgeries of this rare date is not a new one. The author at one time owned an electrotype of Variety #1 which he had a difficult time convincing another collector that it was not genuine. Before acquiring any 1796, a collector should use great caution.

GENERAL COMMENTS

The Mint reports 115,480 Half Cents delivered in the calendar year. In recent years attempts have been made to explain the contradiction of the plentifulness of the 1795's and scarcity of 1796's, when comparing the reported 1795 coinage of 25,600 to the 1796 reported coinage.

In The National Archives there is a book kept by the Mint Treasurer which is known as the "Account Book for the Delivery of Cents and Half Cents 1796-1803". Additionally there are other records which set forth the coinage of Half Cents during this period. What is stated is this:

Half Cents delivered in 1795—fourth quarter only	25,600
Half Cents delivered during first quarter of 1796	109,000
Half Cents delivered during second quarter of 1796	5,090
Half Cents delivered during third quarter to November 24th 1796	1,390

The important thing is that nowhere is it stated what the coins were dated, so that any attempt to answer this enigma is strictly a guess. The first part of the presumed answer is covered in the previous chapter on 1795, where I have also included the second quarter coinage of 5,090. Thus I believe that the actual 1796 dated coinage for both varieties is 1,390.

1797

DESIGN DESCRIPTION Identical to 1795.

DIE PREPARATION Identical to 1795.

PLANCHETS The sources of planchets used are spoiled Large Cents, Talbot Allum & Lee tokens and Mint prepared planchets. The quality of them varies greatly, with most of it being of low qual-

ity. The weights of the planchets vary from 73 to 96 grains. The widths of the planchets vary from 22½ mm to 25 mm.

The edges are of three styles: lettered, gripped and plain. The lettered and gripped edges will be elaborated on as varieties.

VARIETY #1



(Early
Obverse)

(SHOWERS)



(Late
Obverse)



Obverse 1 The 1 over 1. A thinner 1 directly over the 1 of the date. There are also dots over the 7's of the date. I believe these features to be caused by a punch which was used as the first step in engraving the date. As this die is used, it develops numerous cracks and bulges.

Reverse A Seventeen leaves and 5 berries on the left branch of the wreath. Sixteen leaves and 3 berries on the right branch of the wreath. On specimens in less than Fine condition, this reverse is usually lacking detail in various areas due to the unevenness of the planchets used and the failure of the obverse die in this striking.

Die Breaks Obverse. The die becomes shattered from die breaks. The most prominent ones which can be seen on worn specimens are: a crack from the border through B in LIBERTY to the head, and a diagonal break running from the neck of the bust of Liberty toward the border at the 2 o'clock position. On many specimens, this crack fades out into a bulged area at RTY of LIBERTY, which usually cannot be made out.

There are two die flaws which have been referred to as breaks. First, there are two bulges to the left of L in LIBERTY which connect to the border. Secondly, a line connecting the inner and outer edges of the Liberty Cap just below its staff.

Reverse. A line crack develops from the border at the 2 of the fraction, across the top of U and N of UNITED, and then to the border above I in that word. This crack is seen on later strikes only and will have the shattered obverse.

Rarity 2 The majority, if not all, of this variety are overstruck on Talbot Allum & Lee tokens. Parts of the design of these tokens can be usually seen on them. I have never heard or seen a specimen of this variety which was overstruck on a Large Cent. The edge is plain. Some Talbot Allum & Lee overstrikes will show edge lettering which were on the planchet. One specimen in my collection has the letters NE CEN on its edge and was struck over a 1795 Talbot Allum & Lee cent.

Condition Census UNC (2)—AUNC (8).



(MILLS—RAPOPORT)

(Talbot Allum
& Lee Planchet)(Large Cent
Planchet)

Obverse 2 This die is recognized by the border which has long denticles. The bust of Liberty is centered. There is a small whisker like defect on Liberty's neck. On lower grade condition coins this cannot usually be seen.

Reverse A As on the previous variety, except that more detail can usually be seen on lower grade condition coins. This is because the obverse die is not shattered and the planchets seem to be more uniform.

Die Breaks Reverse. Always seen with the die break mentioned on the prior use of this die on Variety #1. On some specimens this break is not as clearly defined as seen on Variety #1. I attribute this to the replacement of the obverse die.

Rarity 3 This Variety is struck on three types of planchets. Those prepared from sheet copper,

spoiled Large Cents and Talbot Allum & Lee tokens. The Talbot Allum & Lee tokens seem to be the largest source. The undertype, if visible, is usually seen on the reverse. The long denticles on the obverse die usually obliterate the undertype at the edges as very often seen on Variety #1. It is my opinion that the obverse die was made deliberately with large denticles so as to eliminate the undertype.

The edge on this variety is plain. However, about a month prior to this writing a specimen has been seen with a partial edge of the type described for Variety #3c. Until another specimen is seen I will withhold making any judgments as to the reason for its existence.

Condition Census UNC (2)—AUNC (4)—EF (2).

VARIETY #3a

(Large Cent
Planchet)

(DUPONT—SHOWERS)

Obverse 3 "The low head". The bust of Liberty is too low in its field. The numerals 1 and 9 of the date appear to be hand cut. The 7's appear to be punched. This die usually shows a ridge-like bulge at the chin of the bust of Liberty and runs toward the right border.

Reverse B Seventeen leaves on each branch of the wreath, with four berries on the left branch and three on the right branch. The additional leaf on the right branch of the wreath points to E in AMERICA.

Die Breaks Reverse. A crack runs from the left border, through E in UNITED, to the wreath where the crack branches. The upper branch runs to the right foot of H in HALF. The lower branch

runs to the top of C in CENT. This crack develops during the use of the die and is never prominent. A specimen must be in at least Very Fine condition, and a late strike, to see this crack in its entirety.

Rarity 3 Struck on a plain edge planchet, to distinguish it from the following varieties.

The planchets used on Varieties #3a, #3b and #3c are presumed to be made from rolled-out Large Cents. Those planchets used on Variety #3a vary greatly in diameter while those used on Varieties #3b and #3c are of more uniform diameter. I also believe that this die combination was struck in 1800 rather than the date the coins bear.

Condition Census AUNC (1)—EF (4)—VF (8).

VARIETY #3b

Obverse 3 The same as #3a.

Reverse B The same as #3a.

Die Breaks The same as #3a.

Rarity 4 The Lettered Edge variety. The edge lettering is smaller and more uneven than in the years 1793 to 1795. There is no leaf after the word DOLLAR, and there is a raised bump between the letters A and DOLLAR.

The process that produced this edge design as well as the following variety can only be guessed at as being one devised by the Mint to produce planchets of more uniform diameter. Apparently the process was a failure and discontinued early

in view of the comparative rarity of Variety #3b and #3c with Variety #3a.

Examination of the lettered and gripped edges reveals that the design being impressed on the planchet edge was not evenly done so that the edge is not at right angles to the obverse and reverse of the coin rather it wavers from one side to the other. There is also no evidence that the Castaing machine such as was used in 1793, 1794 and 1795 was used in that two separate dies are not identifiable. Thus the exact process which produced these edge designs is unknown at this time.

Condition Census EF (1)—VF (10).

VARIETY #3c



(Gripped Edge)

Obverse 3 The same as #3a.

Reverse B The same as #3a.

Die Breaks The same as #3a.

Rarity 7 The "Gripped Edge" variety. The edge has raised bumps of a regular pattern. These can

be viewed as a series of indentations depending on how the edge is viewed.

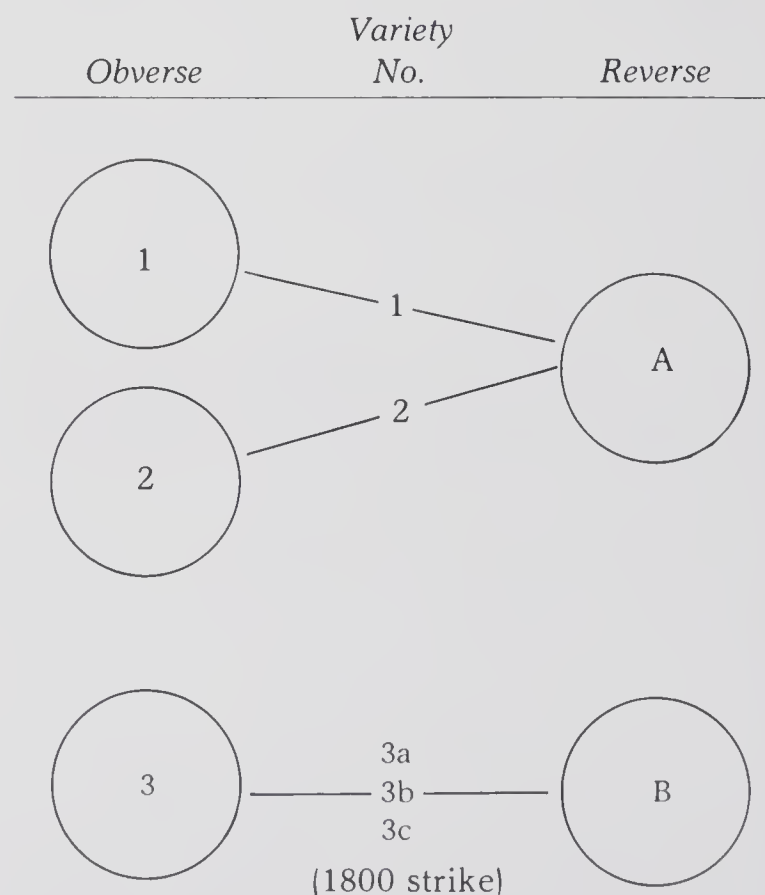
This edge variety was first noted when the Matthew Stickney collection was sold in 1907.

Condition Census VG (3)—G (4).

KEYS TO VARIETIES

Examine obverse and classify:

- A. Bust of Liberty centered, with long denticles at border, is #2.
- B. Bust of Liberty centered, with short denticles. 1 over 1 of date is #1.
- C. Bust of Liberty is low in field.
Examine edge of coin.
 - a. Plain edge is #3a.
 - b. Lettered edge is #3b.
 - c. If edge has a series of bumps it is #3c.

1797
EMISSION SEQUENCE

GENERAL COMMENTS

The Mint reports 107,048 coined for the calendar year. These were delivered on the following dates:

April 24	17,280
April 29	10,000
April 29	8,600
May 2	17,280
May 3	17,280
May 6	18,000
May 8	18,608

These were apparently struck from planchets which are recorded in the "Account Book for the Delivery of Cents and Half Cents 1796-1803" under the date December 12, 1796. "By copper recd in planchets for Half Cents—1914 lb". Another entry in this book, dated February 6, 1797, reads "The above spoild cents that were left of the above copper 27 lb-15 oz. are now roled down for half cents and mixed with the late copper".

The source of the planchets in the first entry was a purchase a few days earlier from William Talbot of Talbot Allum & Lee tokens. This was the second purchase of these tokens by the Mint. Apparently they had found either a cheap or expeditious way of obtaining Half Cents planchets.

For many years the official records of coinage have shown a total of \$60.83 value of Half Cents coined in the year 1799. As no 1799 dated specimens have ever been reported, it has been assumed that the coinage in that year was dated 1797. It is my opinion that the 1799 coinage was actually struck in 1797 and consisted of either Variety #1 or #2 coins. I base this assumption on information taken from the previously mentioned account book of the Mint Treasurer located in The National Archives. An entry dated April 16, 1799 gives the number of Half Cents on hand as 12,170. On the same date, there were delivered to N. Thomas for the Treasurer of the Mint 3,530 Half Cents. On May 13, 1799, 8,640 Half Cents were delivered to the Bank of the United States.

On one of the last pages of the account book, there is a summary which apparently has been used as the original source of information in the past. This summary is headed:

Statement of Cents and half Cents delivered
The Treas er of the Mint from the 1 of
March 1793 to The 30th of Augt 1799
as per Receipts

It should be noted that this statement does not give the dates which the coins bear. This problem seems to have been left for those of us who are interested to attempt to figure it out years later. On this statement it shows 12,167 Half Cents as being DELIVERED to the Treasurer of the Mint after March 1799. I believe the Half Cents on hand as of April 16, 1799 to be undelivered 1797 dated coinage minted in the spring of 1797. A possible reason for the "delivery" of the 12,167 Half Cents being recorded as occurring after March 1799 is a provision of the Act of Congress dated April 24, 1800 which stated:

"Sec. 1 . . . That a sum equal to the amount of the cents and half cents which shall have been coined at the Mint and delivered to the Treasurer, subsequent to March 3, 1799, shall be . . . appropriated for the purchase of copper for the further coinage of cents and half cents . . . (and with similar appropriations to be continued from year to year)."

As previously stated, I believe the 1799 delivery to be Variety #1 or #2 coins. The coins struck with the low head obverse (die 3) appear to have been delivered in 1800. It should be noted that all of these appear to be struck on rolled-out Cent planchets. It has been reported that at least one specimen has been struck over an 1800 Large Cent.

Based on the above, it appears to me 1797 dated coins were DELIVERED as follows:

Second Quarter of 1797	107,048
Second Quarter of 1799	12,170
Second Quarter of 1800	8,622
For a Total of	<u>127,840</u>

1800

DESIGN DESCRIPTION In this year a new obverse design was used. The head of Liberty is the Draped Bust design by Gilbert Stuart, which was first used in 1795 on the Silver Dollar. This design was adopted on the Large Cent in 1796. In 1798 the hair design of the Large Cent was altered slightly by Robert Scot, and is known by Large Cent collectors as Style 2 Hair. This is the style which was adopted for the Half Cent. The style of letter punches used for LIBERTY is also of the second style, which first appeared on the Large Cent in 1798. The Half Cent was the last silver or copper coin to adopt the Draped Bust design.

The reverse die is a carry-over from the previous date of 1797, with single leaves at the end of each branch. The lettering is also of the earlier period and is referred to as Style 1 Lettering by Large Cent collectors.

DIE PREPARATION A hub was used for the obverse to put in the head of Liberty. I am of the opinion that the hub contained marks where the letter E in LIBERTY should be placed, and the numerals 180, thus leaving to the engraver the job of first punching the E and then punching in the letters LIB and RTY and the numerals of the date. There is a center dot located on the hair, which is

worn away after a limited amount of circulation of a coin. It appears to me that one hub was used throughout the Draped Bust series. The numeral punches used for 180 of the date are identical through 1807.

The reverse die was apparently prepared at an earlier date but was not used. This die has defects that appear to be deep rust spots running from the E in UNITED through the wreath to the C in CENT. On Uncirculated specimens, many other defects are seen in the field, noticeably below the ends of the wreath and adjacent to D of UNITED. There are 17 leaves and 3 berries on the left branch of the wreath and 16 leaves and 4 berries on the right branch. The numerals of the fraction denominator are crudely punched.

PLANCHETS Records in The National Archives indicate that in this year both rolled-out Large Cent and Boulton planchets were used. The Boulton planchets were shipped from England via the vessel *POMONA* on April 19 and consisted of six casks weighing 20 cwt 20 lbs. 10 oz. This amounted to 191,786 planchets, all of which were evidently used for 1800 dated specimens.

The edge is plain and is on all subsequent dates.



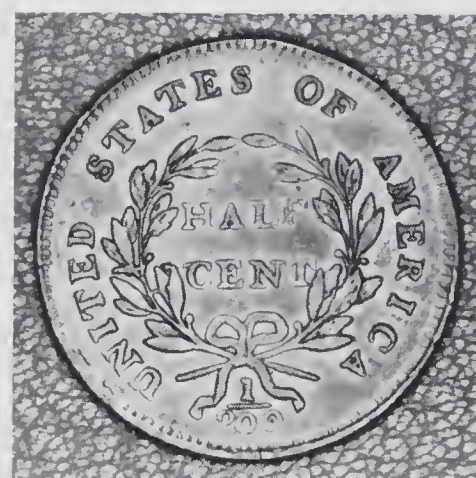
(Early State)



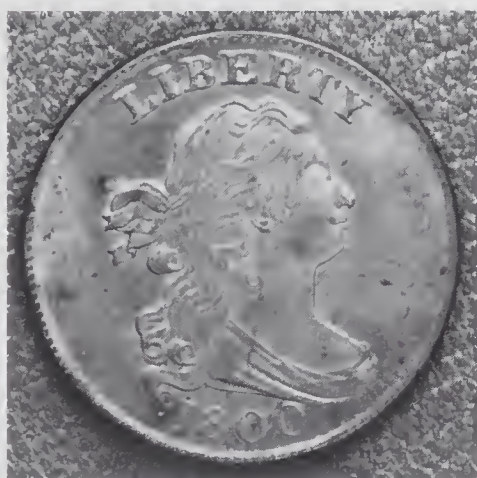
(Early State)



(Rusty State)



(Rusty State)



(Late State)



(Late State)



(Large Cent
Planchet)

Obverse 1 Only known die.

Reverse A Only known die.

Die Breaks Obverse. The rim crumbles and on some specimens it extends from about 8 o'clock position to 12 o'clock. The crumbling first starts at the 11 o'clock position.

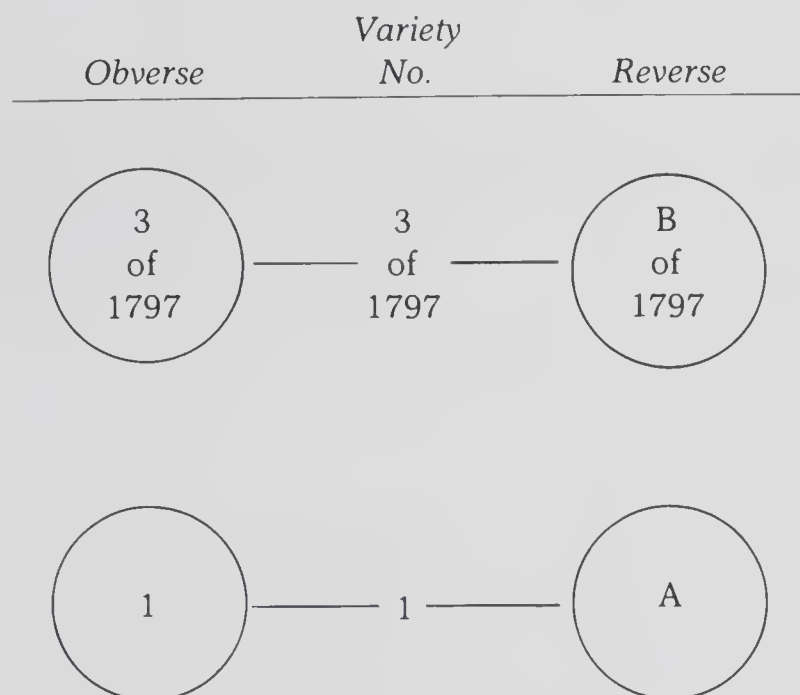
Reverse. No known breaks. However, the defects noted in Die Preparation are frequently referred to as a die break.

Rarity 2 This variety is now known struck over spoiled Large Cents. Six specimens have been identified to my knowledge since I mentioned in the First Edition of this book that such coins should exist.

This pair of dies struck more coins than any previous pair, therefore die states can be identified. The early state is most easily identified by the full sets of denticles on both obverse and reverse. The rusted state must have been due to the gap in coinage either from June to September or October to December. The dies were then worked on to remove the rust and resulted in the final state which can be identified by the gaps in the denticles on the obverse and the weakness of the denticles and the word OF on the reverse.

Condition Census UNC (7+).

1800 EMISSION SEQUENCE



GENERAL COMMENTS

The coinage reported by the Mint is 211,530 delivered on the following dates:

April 29	5,750
May 16	2,872
June 5	12,356
September 17	12,000
September 18	12,000
October 4	2,000
December 5	32,000
December 10	27,000
December 12	105,552

It is my opinion that those delivered through May 16 were Variety #3 of 1797, and were made from rolled-out Large Cents. These amount to 8,622. There is an entry in the Account Book in The National Archives dated March 14, 1800: "Delivered to the rowlers for making ½ cents—spoiled cents—161 lbs." It appears to me that 202,908 dated 1800 specimens were struck on 12,356 rolled-out Cent planchets and 190,552 Boulton planchets.

1802

DESIGN DESCRIPTION Obverse as in 1800. Reverse changes during year to one that conforms with the Large Cent in that the wreath leaves are broader, the left branch of the wreath ends in a single leaf but the right one ends in a double leaf. There are 16 leaves on the left branch of the wreath and 19 on the right. The number of berries varies from 5 to 6 on each branch through the year 1808. The style of lettering is the same as on the obverse.

DIE PREPARATION The obverse die is an overdate. The 2 is not made from the same punch that was used for the denominator of the fraction. It is within the final zero, the outline of which can be seen even on worn specimens. This die differs slightly from the previous 1800 and is definitely another die which was not used in 1800 to my knowledge.

There are two reverse dies: first, the die previously used in 1800, and second, the new style. This die was evidently prepared from a hub which had a stemless wreath, and marks for the letters E in UNITED, STATES, and AMERICA. Also present were marks for the letters HALF CENT and the dividing line of the fraction. The engraver then worked from the center dot and punched in, first, the E's of the legend and, then, the other needed letters, numbers, stems, di-

viding line of the fraction and berries on the wreath.

PLANCHETS All 1802 Half Cents were struck from planchets made from spoiled Cents, and parts of the design of these coins can be seen on some Half Cents. Correspondence between the Mint and Boulton in 1801 indicated that the Mint was quite short of copper. Boulton had made a few deliveries which were all planchets for Cents. The Half Cent was not coined probably due to a lack of planchets and the demand for Cents. In 1802 either there was a demand for the Half Cent or the Mint decided to make use of the accumulated spoiled Large Cents. On August 2, 1802 the Coiner received 195 lbs. of spoiled Large Cents for the purpose of making Half Cents. At a later time, the dates of which are not known, further spoiled Large Cents were apparently sent to the Coiner.

It has been noted in prior writings that most surviving 1802 Half Cents are dark and of apparently low quality copper. I believe the reason for this is that prior to rolling out the spoiled Large Cents, they were heated so as to make less wear on the rollers. It has also been noted that the Large Cent undertype is seldom visible which could result from the softening of the spoiled Large Cents prior to rolling to Half Cent thickness.

VARIETY #1



(UNGAR)



Obverse 1 The overdate.

Reverse A The 1800 reverse. Single leaves at end of each branch of wreath.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 6 This die combination is quite rare. It is well known due to the fact it is listed in popular coin catalogues.

There are about 25 specimens known presently, all of which are in the lower grades of condition. This variety is usually missing in collections which emphasize condition. Ed. Frossard's 1879 book seems to be the first mention of this variety.

In the Ross article of January 1916 it was noted that only two specimens were known and they were in the collection of Commodore Eaton and Tom Elder. The 1954 Hillyer Ryder catalogue stated that six specimens were known and that the variety was not known to David Proskey. The latter statement is a good example of how cataloguers have overemphasized the rarity of this variety to compensate for the lower grade of condition that it is found in.

Condition Census F (4)—VG (5).

VARIETY #2



(Early State)

(BROBSTON)



(Early State)



(Rusted State)



(Rusted State)



(Large Cent Undertype)
(DUPONT)

Obverse 1 The overdate.

Reverse B New reverse of the style described in Die Preparation. The diagnostic feature is 6 berries on the right branch of the wreath. This die is the only one in the entire series with a berry to

GENERAL COMMENTS

The Mint reports 14,366 as the coinage for the calendar year which were delivered by the Coiner to the Treasurer as follows:

August 14	8,200
November 17	6,166

There is, however, a delivery on August 18, 1803 of 5,900 coins which, I believe, to be 1802 dated specimens for the following reasons.

In 1803 the Mint started to receive prepared Half Cent planchets from Boulton. The first shipment was invoiced to the Mint in July 1803 when they were completed by Boulton. The planchets then had to be shipped to Philadelphia. They did not arrive until November 1803, which is three months after the delivery of the 5,900 coins to the Mint Treasurer. Accordingly, the source of the planchets used for the August 1803 delivery should be determined. There is no record that Boulton sent an earlier shipment than the shipment which arrived in November 1803. The Mint was apparently not preparing new copper planchets for Half Cents as no records exist of this. Large Cents were being struck on Boulton planchets with a resulting amount of misstrikes. Thus it appears that the only source of Half Cent planchets would be spoiled Large Cents. No 1803 Half Cents have been seen to my knowledge which exhibit an undertype. Thus I must conclude that the August 1803 delivery consisted of 1802 dated coins. Therefore the number of 1802 Half Cents struck is 20,266.

the right of the stem and the lower outside leaf.
Die Breaks Obverse. There is a line break from the left foot of B in LIBERTY. Reverse. A number of small line breaks develop between some of the letters of the legend. However, these occur when the die is its rusted state. One specimen has been reported as having a rim break over RICA of AMERICA.

Rarity 3 This Variety is seen in two states. As in 1800 the dies became rusted but they were not as extensively reworked to remove the rust. The later strikes will exhibit granular surfaces due to the rust. On the obverse, the date, LIBERTY and the fields will show this. On the reverse the legend UNITED STATES OF AMERICA and the fraction will also exhibit rust marks. The words HALF CENT are weak due to the reworking of the die.

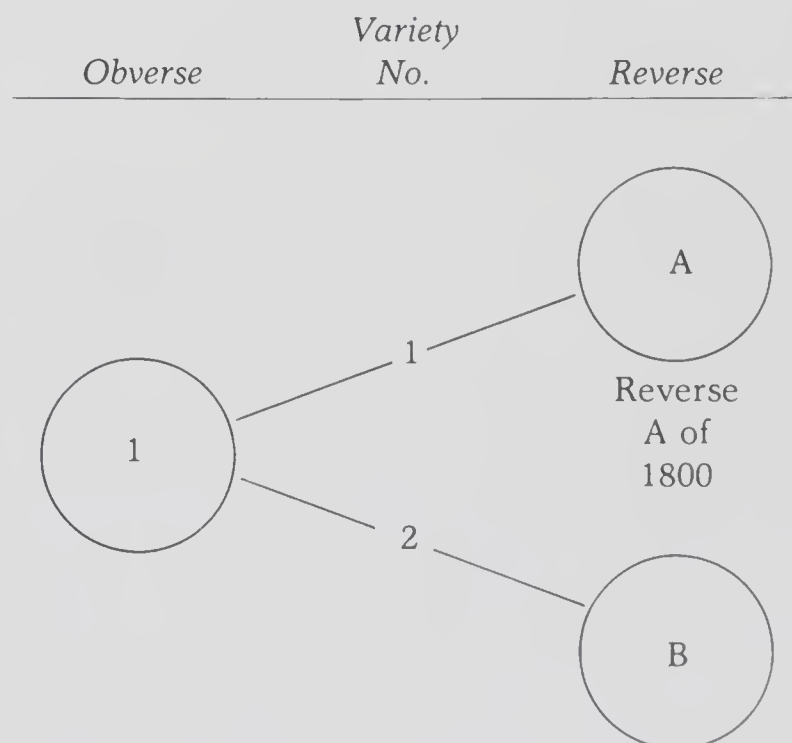
Condition Census VF (10).

KEYS TO VARIETIES

Examine the reverse and classify:

- Single leaves at end of each branch of wreath is #1.
- Double leaves at end of right branch of wreath is #2.

1802 EMISSION SEQUENCE



1803

DESIGN DESCRIPTION Both obverse and reverse designs are as previously described. The obverse is the Draped Bust adopted in 1800. The reverse is the Wreath design adopted in 1802. These designs continue through 1808; therefore, there will be no further design descriptions until 1809.

DIE PREPARATION This was discussed for

the obverse in the chapter on 1800 and for the reverse in the chapter on 1802. No changes are made in year 1803–1808 except as noted in the description of varieties. There will be no further comment on this until 1809.

PLANCHETS Planchets were supplied by Boulton of England. Invoices in The National Archives indicate the following shipments:

Date	Casks	Net Weight			No. of 84 Grain Planchets
		CWT	QR	Lbs	
July 1803	33	100	- 2	- 6	938,500
August 1803	31	101	- 2	- 7	947,917
September 1804	62	201	- 1	- 0	1,878,333
August 1807	-	100	- 0	- 0	933,333
					<u>4,698,083</u>

The net weights are taken from the invoices. The system of weights was the avoirdupois of 7,000 grains to the lb. Each QR was 28 lbs. and each CWT, 112 lbs.

The total coinage for the period 1803 through 1811 as reported by the Mint amounted to 4,632,388, so the source of all planchets through 1811 is apparent. There will be no further comment on planchets until 1825.

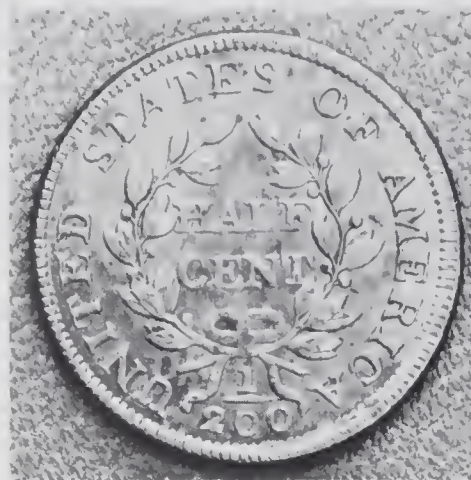
VARIETY #1



Obverse 1 The letter T in LIBERTY has vestiges of its feet. Apparently the letter punch was broken and the engraver attempted to strengthen this by hand. The 0 and 3 of the date are close when compared to the other known obverse.

Reverse A Five berries on each branch of the wreath. There is a line joining the right end of the fraction dividing line with the right ribbon. This can be seen on all but very worn or corroded specimens. The letter U in UNITED has a reverse comma-like gouge between the tops of the letter.

Die Breaks Reverse. This die develops a crack



running from the border at the first T in STATES through the wreath to the border between A and M in AMERICA. Another crack develops from the border at N of UNITED and passes through the wreath and N of CENT. On some specimens this crack joins the first crack to the right of L in HALF.

Rarity 1 One of the two common varieties of 1803; however, this coin is difficult to obtain in higher than Very Fine condition.

Condition Census UNC (4)—AUNC (6).

VARIETY #2



(BROBSTON—SHOWERS)



Obverse 1 The letter T has smaller vestiges of its feet.

Reverse B Five berries on each branch of the wreath. The letter T in CENT does not have a left foot. The fraction is similar to reverse A but there is no line joining the dividing line to the right ribbon and there is no defect in U of UNITED.

Die Breaks Reverse. A line crack develops from the first S in STATES touching the tops of



(Broken Reverse Die)
(UNGAR)

the letters through C in AMERICA and reaches the border below the right ribbon. The border above STAT later chips away leaving a large mass of metal above those letters.

Rarity 5 This coin is seldom seen in condition higher than Fine but, as most persons do not attribute their 1803's, it can be found.

Condition Census EF (1)—VF (6).

VARIETY #3



(First Use)



(Second Use)



Obverse 2 The 0 and 3 are widely separated, when compared to the previous variety. It usually has clash marks which are caused by the dies coming together without a planchet. These clash marks are seen on both sides of the figure of Liberty and are the reverse impression of the wreath. The die was then apparently removed to be repaired and rehardened. It then reappears this time with a bulge at the 18 of the date and traces of the clash marks in the fields. I believe that the bulge is caused by the hardening process as similar die imperfections appear at this time on 1804 dies.

Reverse C Five berries on each branch of the wreath. The diagnostic feature of the reverse is the right foot of F in HALF which is missing. The zeros of the denominator almost touch. I have heard it referred to as the "Cross-eyed Zero" reverse.

Die Breaks Obverse. This die develops a crack from the B in LIBERTY to the hair. The upper and lower curves of the 3 are joined and finally the die breaks in an irregular line crack from the border to the hair knot.

Reverse. A crack develops from the second T in STATES through F in HALF and reaches the border between M and E of AMERICA.

Rarity 1 One of the two common 1803 dated coins, it is scarce with perfect dies (first use), and quite common with the cracked reverse die (second use). It is my opinion that the second use specimens were struck in 1804 as the reverse die is used in an earlier state of deterioration with an 1804 obverse.

Condition Census UNC (6)—AUNC (4).



Obverse 1 The T in LIBERTY is now completely devoid of its feet. I believe this to be an 1805 strike as it is combined with an 1805 style reverse. Thus I believe that this die was put aside for awhile and used only due to the necessity for an obverse die in 1805.

Reverse D This is easily identified as the left branch of the wreath has six berries. The extra berry is on the outside of the wreath below the first T in STATES. The fraction and the letters E of the legend are also at the style of 1805. Early in this striking, clash marks develop on the reverse.



The outline of the hair knot of the obverse can be seen between the H of HALF and the C of CENT. Apparently this was noticed at the Mint and the obverse or reverse die rotated 180°. Some specimens seen have a die rotated so that the reverse is upside down when turned as a coin should be.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 3 The same comment applies on this coin as I have made on Variety #2; however, it has been my experience that it is not as scarce.

Condition Census AUNC (2)—EF (7).

KEYS TO VARIETIES

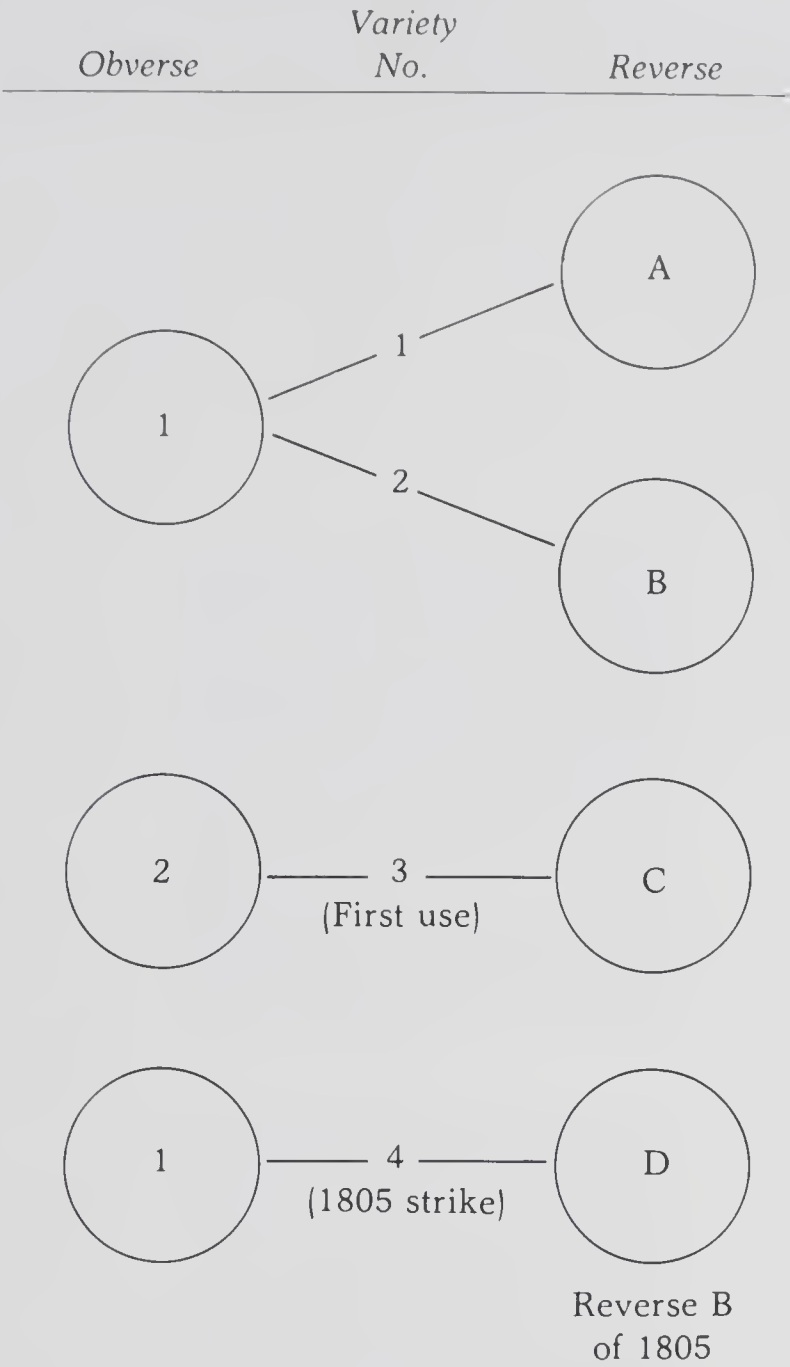
The 1803's classify themselves by examining the reverses.

- A. Large fraction with line from dividing line to right ribbon, obverse, close 0 and 3 is #1.
- B. Zeros of fraction almost touch—obverse wide 0 and 3 with bulge at 18 (usually) is #3.
- C. If none of the above apply, count the berries on the left branch of the wreath; if there are

six, the obverse should have the close 0 and 3 and is #4.

- D. If there are five berries, examine the T in CENT; if the left foot is missing and the obverse is the close 0 and 3, it is #2; however, examine the U in UNITED, as on worn #1's, the line from the dividing line of the fraction to the right ribbon is sometimes faint.

1803
EMISSION SEQUENCE



GENERAL COMMENTS

The Mint reports a coinage of 97,900 for this calendar year. In the prior Chapter I have indicated that 5900 of this coinage to be 1802 strikes. Thus the calendar year total of 1803 dated specimens is 92,000. In view of the large number of surviving specimens, this amount is obviously not the number of coins struck with an 1803 date. As stated previously I believe that 1803 dated coins were minted in 1804 and 1805. I have not found any records which would indicate the number of dated 1803's struck. I feel that there probably is no record, and again, the lack of concern by the Mint for the Half Cent leaves an enigma for the present day numismatist.

1804

VARIETY #1



(First Use)



(Second Use)



Observe 1 A large 4 with a vertical crosslet at the end of the horizontal line of the numeral. This numeral has been placed in the die much higher than the 180 so that it touches the bust.

Reverse A This is reverse C of 1803. I have determined the following order of obverse dies for this reverse by closely examining this die, and it appears to me that this is the order of obverse dies:

1. Obverse 2 of 1803 (first use)
 2. Obverse 1 of 1804 (first use)
 3. Obverse 2 of 1803 (second use)
 4. Obverse 2 of 1804 (first and only use)
 5. Obverse 1 of 1804 (second use)
- Thus this variety comes with a lightly cracked

reverse die (first use) and with the reverse badly cracked (second use). (See Emission Sequence)

Die Breaks Reverse. As noted on Variety #3 of 1803. In the second use of this die combination, the die is so badly cracked that the letters to the right of the crack are very faint even on Fine specimens. Another crack develops during the second use which runs from the wreath stem between the third and fourth outside cluster of leaves to the first A in AMERICA.

Rarity 3 Both first use and second use states of the reverse die are of equal scarceness. Specimens in Very Fine or higher condition are quite rare.

Condition Census UNC (1)—AUNC (2)—EF (4).

VARIETY #2



(Obverse Rim Break)
(UNGAR)

Obverse 2 The diagnostic feature is the crosslet 4, which is below the bottom arc line of the 180 and tilted to the left. Known to Half Cent collectors as the "Low 4".

Reverse A The cross-eyed zeros

Die Breaks Obverse. Always seen with the crack in front of the bust as described on Variety #4 in a more advanced state. Another crack develops from the border at E of LIBERTY to the

top of that letter through the tops of RTY to the border at the right of Y. The die eventually chips out leaving a large rim break over these letters.

Reverse. Always seen with the cracks first noted on Variety #3 of 1803.

Rarity 7 This variety was discovered by Howard Hazelcorn in 1967. Presently there are eight specimens known.

Condition Census F (2)—VG (1)—G (4).

VARIETY #3

(None)

Delisted—See Variety #5
and General Comments for 1804

VARIETY #4



(EATON—DUPONT
—SHOWERS)



Obverse 2 The low 4

Reverse B The outstanding feature of this die is the numerator of the fraction. The top of the 1 is the same distance from the knot as the bottom is from the dividing line of the fraction. Known as the "Equi-distant Numerator."

Die Breaks Obverse. A line crack develops from the crosslet of the 4 of the date and runs to the point of the bust where it branches to the rim. The other branch fades out into the field in front of Liberty's neck but follows the rim.

Reverse. This die is seen with a small crack starting at the 2 of the denominator and passing through the left ribbon and terminating at the U of UNITED. Another crack connects the bottoms of STATES and OF. As most known specimens of this variety are quite worn, these die cracks are usually difficult to see.

Rarity 5 Seldom seen except in worn condition, it can be found if one examines all 1804's with crosslet 4 and stems offered for sale.

Condition Census VF (5)—F (6).

VARIETY #5



(Obverse
No Bulge)

Obverse 1 and 1a. During this die marriage obverse 1 undergoes changes which result in the so-called Spiked Chin obverse.

The first strikes do not have the spiked chin and for a number of years were thought to be a separate variety. Early in the striking period, the dies clashed with a piece of foreign material between them which produced the spiked chin on the obverse as well as protrusions between the lips. On the reverse die these irregular shapes may be seen in the right branch of the wreath. However, they are not as well defined. The obverse die was evidently reworked to remove these clash marks at which time scrape-like marks to the right of the neck of Liberty were put on the die. The striking of coins then resumed and during the striking a large semi-circular bulge at the border to the right of Liberty's face developed.

Reverse B The Equi-distant Numerator.

Die Breaks Obverse. Thin cracks develop connecting some letters of the word LIBERTY.

Reverse. A large irregular shaped crack develops during this die combination, and runs the

length of the die from A in STATES through the wreath to the border above C in AMERICA. The cracks which were described for #4 become more prominent and the first crack extends from the U through the N in UNITED. This crack also extends at its other end from the 2 of the denominator to the border. The light crack connecting the bottoms of STATES and OF becomes more prominent and extends from D of UNITED to the first A in AMERICA. On worn specimens, only parts of the cracks described above can be seen. There is noticeable die sinking to the right of the second T of STATES. This results in ES of STATES and the word OF being faint on many Fine or higher specimens.

Rarity 4 The early state is now known by only three specimens all of which are in a low grade of condition. The intermediate state (without the bulge but with the spiked chin) is occasionally seen. The late state is relatively common compared to the other states but high condition coins of this variety are quite scarce.

Condition Census UNC (1)—AUNC (4)—EF (6).



(Early die state)



(Intermediate die state)



(Intermediate die state)

(Late die state)
(BROBSTON)

Obverse 1a The spiked chin. During this use the denticles begin to fade due to usage of the die.

Reverse C The final A in AMERICA is distant from the right ribbon. All letter T's have vestigial feet which were apparently hand-cut into the die. This die is usually seen in a damaged condition which will be described.

Die Breaks Obverse. Line cracks connecting the top letters of LIBE become more prominent.

Reverse. A line crack develops from O in OF to the border between A and M. Another crack develops one denticle below and runs across the top of MERICA, joining the border below the right ribbon. A third crack develops below the

final zero of the denominator and runs along the tops of the letters to E in STATES. As the use of this die continues, various portions of the rim chip away resulting in large masses of metal which make this reverse very easy to identify.

Rarity 2 This variety is often collected by die states of the reverse since it is a relatively common coin. The actual number of states of the reverse is difficult to define. One collector has a display of seventeen states. There is one known specimen in high condition which has no evidence of any break.

Condition Census UNC (4)—AUNC (6).

VARIETY #7



(Early die state)



(Intermediate die state)



(Late die state)

Obverse 1a The spiked chin.

Reverse D The right point of the triple leaf on the right branch of the wreath is half way between the O and F, which are widely separated when compared to the other 1804 reverses. The left foot of the first T in STATES is missing and the right foot is present. This is the only stemmed 1804 reverse with this feature.

Die Breaks Obverse. Always seen with line cracks through LIBERTY.

Reverse. The rim first chips away at OF A and later extends to the I in AMERICA. One specimen is known with an additional rim break from the second T to the final S of STATES.

Rarity 5 About fifty examples of this variety are now known, however, most are in low grades of condition.

Condition Census AUNC (2)—EF (3)—VF (11).

VARIETY #8



(RYDER—BROBSTON)



(Broken Obverse)



(RYDER—BROBSTON)

Obverse 1a The spiked chin.

Reverse E Very similar to reverse C but the final A in AMERICA almost joins the right ribbon. In classifying reverses of spiked chin 1804's, check the final A in AMERICA as this is the only spiked chin reverse with this feature. A die defect in the form of a ridge connects the top of the R in AMERICA to the border; however, in this striking it is sometimes faint and, on worn specimens, cannot be seen.

Die Breaks Obverse. The line cracks in LIBERTY extend through the tops of all the letters and finally chip out over LIBE, which caused the die to be discarded. This was a particularly tough die which lasted through five different reverses but at last is rendered "Hors de combat".

Rarity 1 The most common spiked chin variety.

Condition Census UNC (4)—AUNC (6).

VARIETY #9



(Broken Obverse)



Obverse 3 A large crosslet 4, leaning to the left but distant from O of the date, to distinguish it from obverse 2.

Reverse E The ridge from the top of the R in AMERICA is more prominent.

Die Breaks Obverse. Often seen with a rim break at RTY of LIBERTY. On Very Fine or higher specimens, faint cracks can be seen in the

date and LIBERTY. There is also a break from the 4 in the date to the point of the bust of Liberty where it makes a 90° turn to the rim.

Rarity 2 Second most common crosslet 4, with stems, without the spiked chin. For some unexplained reason most specimens with the rim break are in the lower grades of condition.

Condition Census UNC (3)—AUNC (9).

VARIETY #10



Obverse 4 Large crosslet 4 straight up. Higher than 0 and almost touching the bust and the 0. Seen with irregular defects in the field below the knot in the hair.

Reverse E The ridge connecting R in AMERICA to the border is so large that it merges with the letter.

Die Breaks None known. Examples of this striking are seen with both obverse and reverse dies rusted.



Rarity 1 The most common crosslet 4, with stems, without spiked chin. The rusted dies indicate that the dies were unused for awhile. It is known that the Mint closed for a period in 1804 due to yellow fever. It could be that these dies were improperly stored, at which time the rust developed.

Condition Census UNC (4)—AUNC (8).

VARIETY #11



Obverse 5 "The Plain 4". This die is the only 1804 which lacks the vertical crosslet on the 4.

Reverse F This reverse is different from any of the preceding ones as all the letters are perfectly formed and there are six berries on the left branch of the wreath. The stem ends are short and not uniform.

Die Breaks Obverse. A long thin crack develops in the field of the obverse to the left of the head of LIBERTY.

Reverse. This die bulges to the lower right of the center. On worn specimens, ALF and ENT and part of the right branch of the wreath cannot be seen.



Rarity 3 A well-known variety as it is the only plain 4 with stems. Very scarce in condition higher than Very Fine; however, in lower grades it is only fairly scarce. The failure of the reverse die must have occurred early in its life judging from this variety's scarceness. It should be noted that both the obverse and reverse dies are used for the first time in this striking. I believe this is the first coin to be minted from the First Press which will continue to coin Half Cents through 1806. (See Emission Sequence).

Condition Census UNC (2)—AUNC (2)—EF (5).

VARIETY #12



Obverse 4 Crosslet 4 previously used to coin Variety #10.

Reverse G The stemless wreath. This reverse can be identified at once due to the lack of stems between the ribbons and the branches of the wreath. Apparently the engraver neglected to cut them. The left branch of the wreath has six berries. All berries on this reverse are very prominent. There is a flaw in the die from the fourth outside leaf of the left branch of the wreath



through the letter E in UNITED, where it terminates at the upper vertical of the middle horizontal of that letter. This flaw gets larger as the die is used on 1804 dated specimens.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 2 Another well-known variety, the crosslet 4, without stems. This coin is only scarce in uncirculated condition.

Condition Census UNC (6)—AUNC (12).

VARIETY #13



Obverse 5 The plain 4. This die is sometimes rusted.

Reverse G The stemless wreath. In this striking the flaw mentioned in the last variety is more prominent, but it takes at least a Fine specimen to locate it.

Die Breaks Obverse. Always seen with the crack described for Variety #11, however, on

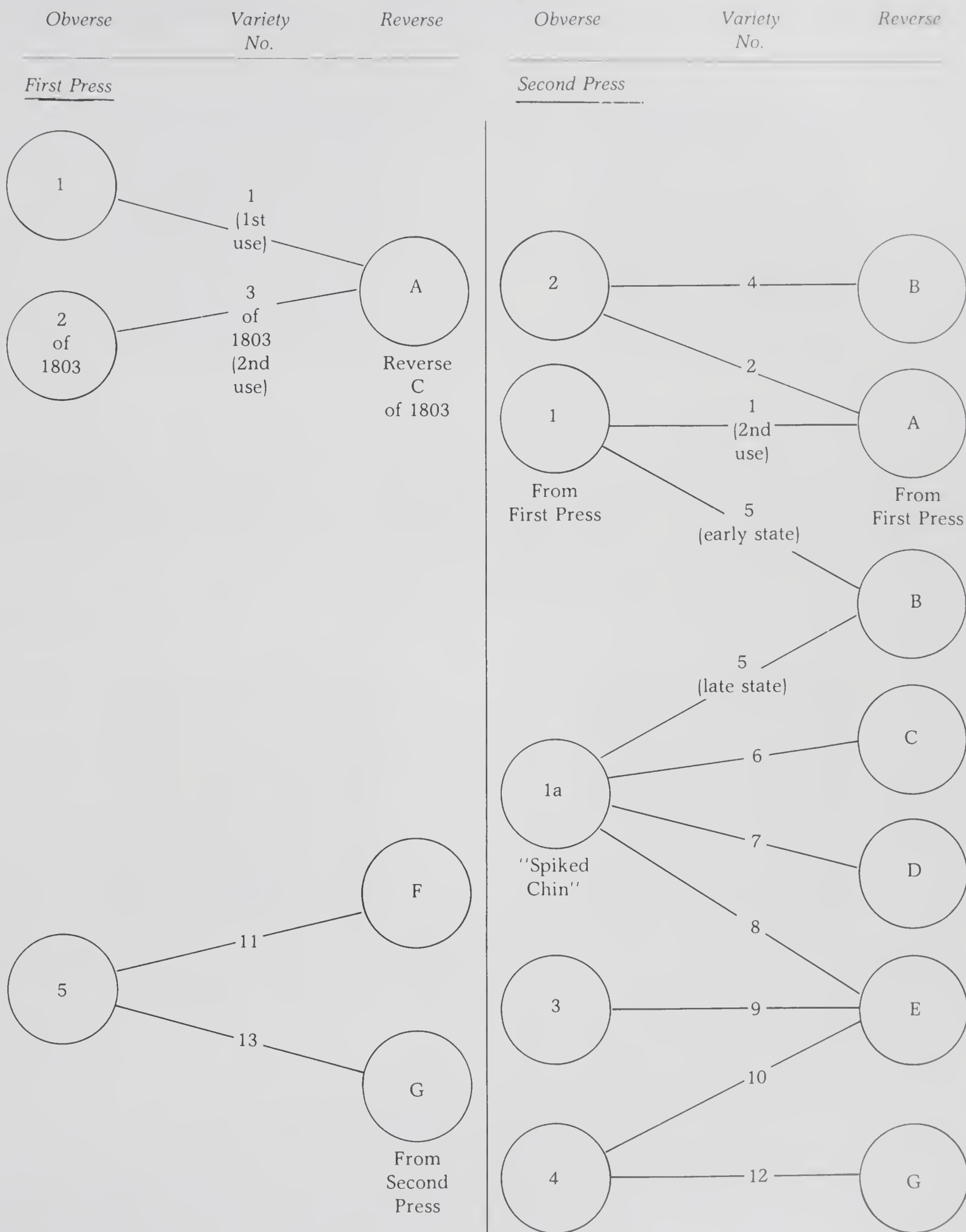


lower grade of condition specimens it may be worn off.

Rarity 1 The plain 4, without stems. The most common 1804 Half Cent in all conditions. It has been my experience that one out of every four 1804 Half Cents is of this variety.

Condition Census UNC (7+).

EMISSION SEQUENCE



 KEYS TO VARIETIES

Examine obverse and classify:

- A. Plain 4. Examine reverse. Stems to wreath is #11. Without stems to wreath is #13.
- B. Crosslet 4. With spiked chin. Examine reverse. Final A in AMERICA almost touches ribbon is #8.
Right point of triple leaf between O and F is #7.
Equi-distant Numerator in fraction is #5.
If none of the above apply, it should be #6.
- C. Crosslet 4. Without spiked chin. A further look at the position of the 4 is necessary.

- a. High 4 touching bust. Examine reverse. Zeros of fraction almost touch is #1. Equi-distant Numerator in fraction is #5. (Early state)
- b. High 4 not touching bust. Examine reverse. Stemless wreath is #12. Stems to wreath is #10.
- c. Low 4 distant from 0 is #9.
- d. Low 4 close to 0. Examine reverse. Equi-distant Numerator in fraction is #4. Zeros of fraction almost touch is #2.

 GENERAL COMMENTS

The Mint reports a coinage of 1,055,312 Half Cents for the calendar year. It undoubtedly includes some 1803 dated specimens, and I believe some 1804 dated specimens are included in the 1805 calendar year total. In the year 1804 the Mint coined more Half Cents than Cents. This was probably not due to an unusual demand for the "Little Half Sisters", but a matter of expediency. Correspondence with Boulton in England indicates that the price of copper had risen, and, while there was one shipment of planchets for Cents and Half Cents, the scarceness of the 1804 Cent indicates that once the Cent planchets were used up, the copper coinage was concentrated on Half Cents until more Cent planchets were received. The Mint had received approximately 1,900,000 Half Cent planchets in 1803, and a similar amount in the fall of 1804, so there was a plentiful supply on hand.

The emission sequence has been revised from the First Edition but the numbering of Varieties has remained the same. Variety #3 has been eliminated as it is now considered to be an early state of Variety #5. The rim break on Variety #2, first discovered by Sam Ungar in November 1973, proves that Variety #2 was struck after Variety #4. It should be remembered that the emission sequence set forth for all dates in this edition is a presumed one. Future students of this facet of the early times of the Mint may revise it again in light of new evidence.

To Half Cent collectors, the 1804 dated specimens are a real challenge and there are enough scarce and rare varieties so that one never stops looking at any 1804 offered.

1805

VARIETY #1



Obverse 1 A small unusually shaped 5, which does not touch the bust. On most specimens a small line may be seen above the upper stroke of the 5. In all other respects this die conforms to those used beginning with 1800.

Reverse A The stemless wreath. This is the same die which was used in 1804. On some higher conditioned coins, rust pits can be seen. The die flaw between E in UNITED and the wreath starts to disappear as the die wears, so



that earlier strikes will have the feature just as it is on Variety #13 of 1804.

Die Breaks Reverse. During this year a slight rim crumbling occurs between the right ribbon end and the final A in AMERICA. To see this, a coin must be in Very Fine or higher condition.

Rarity 1 By far the most common 1805 and easily available in all conditions except Uncirculated.

Condition Census UNC (7+).

VARIETY #2



Obverse 2 An extremely small 5 on which the upper stroke is more horizontal than the previous obverse. The vertical line of the 5 is also shorter and thicker.

Reverse B The same die which was described for 1803, Variety #4. All letters are perfectly formed and the E's of the legend are smaller than the previous ones. The wreath has six berries on the left branch.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 6 This is a particularly elusive coin. As no die breaks are known, just why the reverse die



was discarded is unknown. Most specimens are in worn condition with the reverse particularly faint at HALF CENT. I believe that this coin was minted on the press referred to as the second press in 1804 which, I assume, was first used in 1805 to coin Cents. When the Mint ran out of Cent planchets, this press was changed back to Half Cents. Based on this, it follows that 1803, Variety #4, was the first coin minted on the second press in 1805, and was followed by this variety. (See Emission Sequence and General Comments.)

Condition Census VF (2)—F (5).

VARIETY #3



Obverse 2 In this striking the field to the right of the head of Liberty has a very large bulge. I can only guess that this was due to an attempt to reharden the die.

Reverse C This die has six berries on the left branch and small E's in the legend. In the denominator of the fraction, the 2 is distant from the zeros. There is a small flaw running from the



lower part of the final A in AMERICA almost to, but not touching, the right ribbon.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 5 The second scarce 1805, both of which are mentioned in popular coin catalogues as the Small 5 with Stems and priced in accordance with their scarceness.

Condition Census EF (1)—VF (3)—F (7).

VARIETY #4



Obverse 3 A large 5 when compared to the previous 5's. The numeral is small when compared to the 180. The upper stroke of the 5 touches the bust.

Reverse C In this striking, often seen with clash marks of the obverse die between the wreath and H of HALF and C of CENT and F in HALF.

Die Breaks Obverse. The die develops a crack from the top of the 1, which runs diagonally to the lower loop of the 8. This crack can be seen even



on worn specimens. Other small line cracks develop in the same area, and another line crack runs from the left of LIBERTY through that word, and ends below the right branch of Y. There are other imperfections in the die of a similar nature, which require a specimen of at least Extremely Fine condition to see.

Rarity 2 Not quite as common as Variety #1.

Condition Census UNC (6)—AUNC (7+).

KEYS TO VARIETIES

Examine reverse and classify:

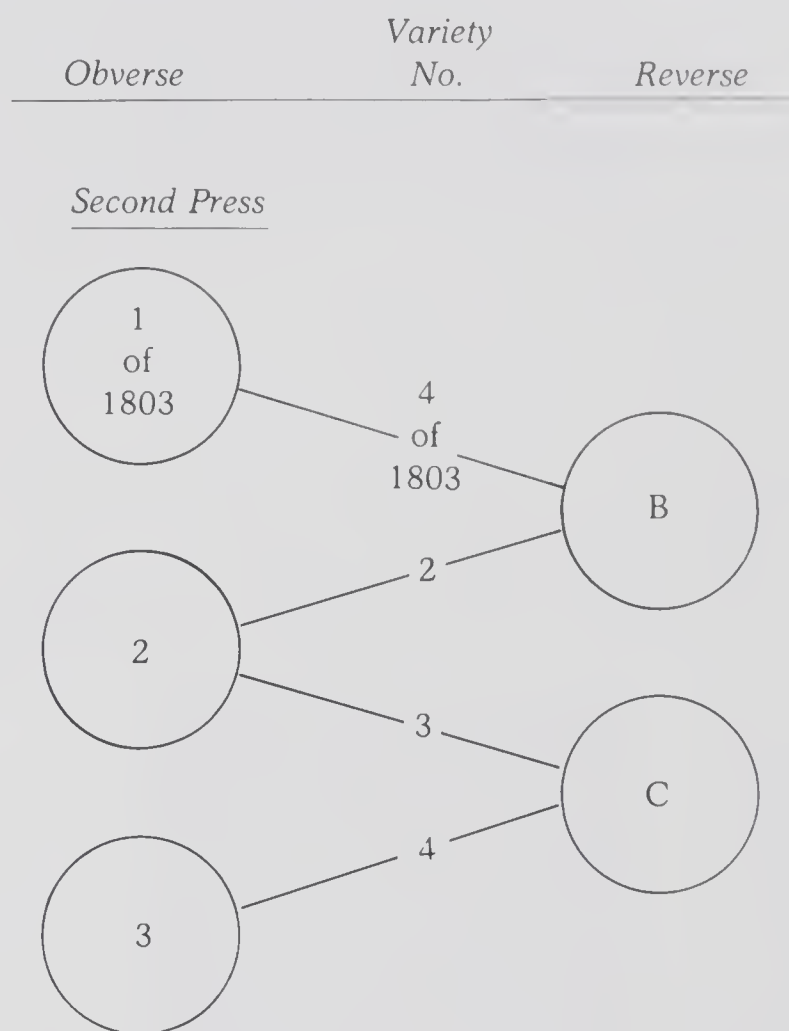
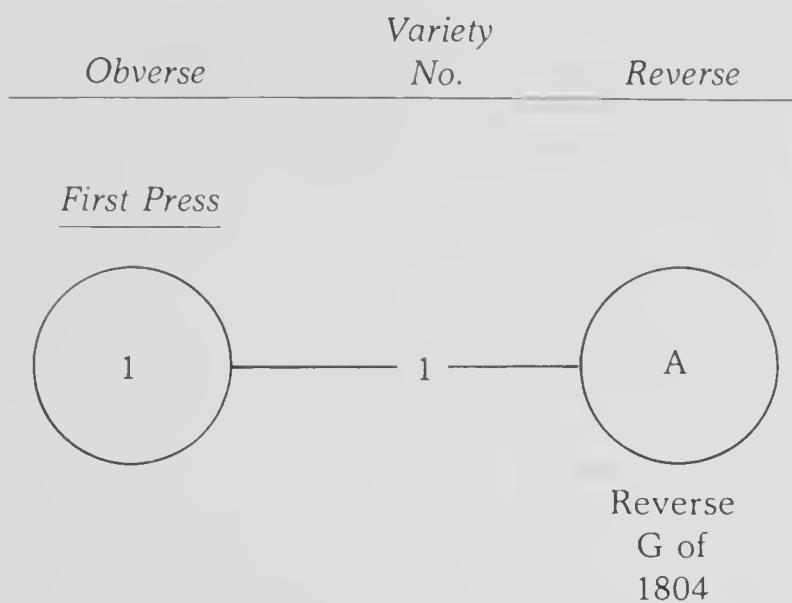
- A. Stemless wreath is #1; obverse should be as described.
 B. Stems to wreath.
 a. Right foot of T in CENT is present and

touches leaf. Obverse should be small 5. This is #2.

- b. Right foot of T in CENT is covered by leaf. Examine obverse. If 5 touches bust, it is #4. If 5 does not touch bust, it is #3.

1805

EMISSION SEQUENCE



Coinage for this calendar year is 814,464 which probably includes many of Variety #13 of 1804. The total is only slightly below the Cent coinage of 941 116. Again I am of the opinion that the large number of Half Cents minted was due to a shortage of Cent planchets and not due to a demand for the Half Cent. By the end of 1805 only about half of the Half Cent planchets from Boulton in England had been used. No further shipments were received until 1807.

My placing of an 1803 dated coin in coinage for this year will probably raise some numismatic eyebrows, but to me it is the solution to the enigma of the same reverse die being used with obverses dated two years apart. The apparent answer would be that the reverse die was used in the earlier year and merely saved to be used again, but I disagree for a number of reasons. The most important one to me is the style of the reverse. The left branch of the wreath has six berries, instead of five. The E's in the legend are smaller than any used in 1803 and 1804. The letter T in the legend has its feet, which does not occur on the other 1803's and the majority of 1804's.

Due to these reasons I believe that the die saved was the 1803 obverse. It should be noted that this is the last use of this die. I believe that in 1805, when the Mint exhausted its supply of Cent planchets, the coining press which had been used for Cents was changed to Half Cents. There was a plentiful supply of Half Cent planchets on hand. The other press was turning out 1805 dated Half Cents, so the engraver started to make another 1805 obverse die, the reverse die having been previously made to replace the stemless wreath die then being used in the first press. Since the engraver had not finished a second 1805 obverse, the 1803 obverse was put in the press, together with the extra reverse which had been prepared but not used. The reasoning here is strictly mine and if it is wrong, only I am accountable. However, I have studied this question for a number of years and am reasonably sure that this is the explanation.

In the ten years since writing the above explanation as to the probability of an 1803 obverse die being used in 1805, I have heard nothing to dispute this hypothesis. However, as before, any new evidence or thoughts would be appreciated.

1806

VARIETY #1



Obverse 1 The small high 6. The bottom of the 6 is well above the bottom of the O. Clash marks have been reported on some specimens.

Reverse A The stemless wreath. This is the same die which was used for 1804 and 1805 dated coins. This die must have stayed in the same press and lasted far beyond its expected life. In this year the die appears, on Uncirculated specimens, to have rust pits over its entire surface. The flaw from E in UNITED to the wreath has almost com-



pletely disappeared due to die wear. The reverse is rotated on some specimens.

Die Breaks Obverse. A very light crack develops through the top of the word LIBERTY.

Reverse. The rim crumbling mentioned in 1805 extends, during the die's use, from the final zero of the denominator to R in AMERICA.

Rarity 1 A common coin in all conditions except red Uncirculated.

Condition Census UNC (7+).

VARIETY #2



Obverse 2 The small 6. The bottom of the 6 is not quite even with the bottom arc line of the 180. The top of the 6 is more distant from the bust than on the prior obverse. I have trouble telling these two dies apart. Since one combination with obverse 1 is very rare, I have developed another point of reference. On obverse 1, the bottom of B in LIBERTY is considerably below the bottom of the letter E. On obverse 2, the bottom line of the B is above the E.

Reverse B Stems to wreath, six berries on left branch, and small E's. The denominator of the fraction is from a new style punch. The numerals are smaller than on previous dies and are widely spaced. The R and I in AMERICA touch at their bases, which does not occur on the other



stemmed wreath reverse die of this year.

Die Breaks Obverse. A thin irregular crack develops from the rim below the zero of the date to the bust of Liberty. This crack passes through the bottom of the 6.

Rarity 4 Another well-publicized coin which is seldom seen in higher than Very Fine condition. The dies, when completed, apparently had their surfaces polished. The high grade examples in the condition census all have proof-like fields.

It is my opinion that this coin was struck on the second press which had previously coined Variety #4 of 1805. When Cent planchets became available again, Half Cent coinage ceased from this press.

Condition Census AUNC (7).

VARIETY #3



(Broken Die) (McGUIGAN)

Obverse 1 The small high 6.

Reverse B Stems to wreath.

Die Breaks Obverse. Same as mentioned for Variety #1. The crack is not visible on worn specimens. Reverse. Some specimens have a rim

break at the ICA of AMERICA.

Rarity 6 This variety was discovered by Joseph L. Brobston in 1947.

Condition Census F (2)—VG (4)—G (7).

VARIETY #4



Obverse 3 A large 6 which merges into the bust drapery.

Reverse C Stems to wreath but now with five berries on the left branch of the wreath. (All future Draped Bust reverses have five berries.) R and I in AMERICA do not touch at their bases. Fraction is similar to reverse B. The dividing line of the fraction is long and the right end is thinner

than the center and left end. This die is often seen with parts of the wreath faintly struck even on Uncirculated specimens.

Die Breaks. None known.

Rarity 1 Very common in all conditions including Uncirculated.

Condition Census UNC (7+).

KEYS TO VARIETIES

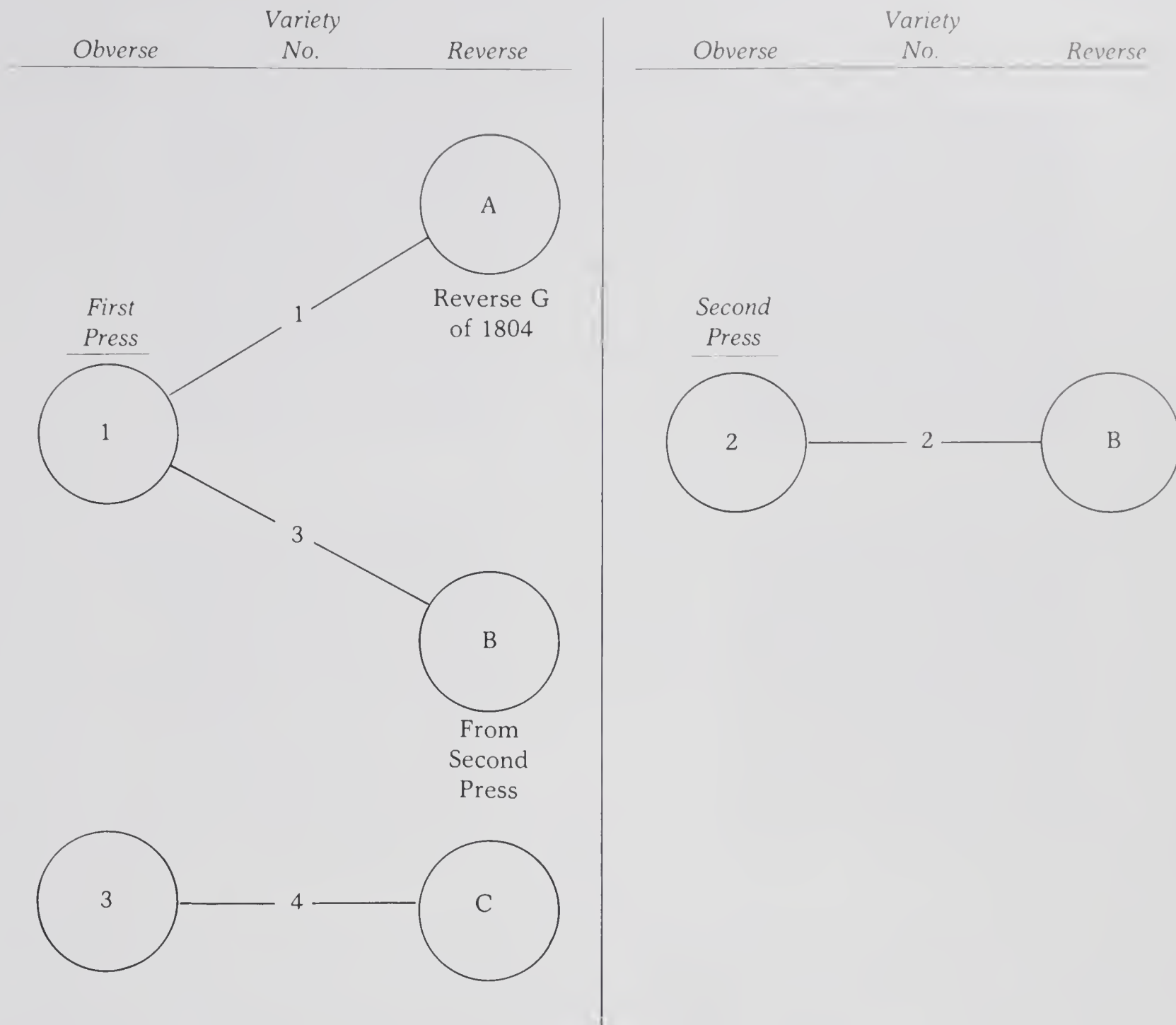
Examine obverse and classify:

- A. Large 6 merging into bust is #4.
- B. Small 6. Examine reverse.
 - a. Stemless wreath is #1.

- b. Stems to wreath. Examine obverse again.
 - (a) High B in LIBERTY is #2.
 - (b) Low B in LIBERTY is #3.

1806

EMISSION SEQUENCE



GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage for the calendar year is 356,000 which does not seem to be the proper ratio of surviving specimens. Apparently some 1806 dated specimens were struck in 1807.

Cent coinage for the year 1806 is reported as 348,000 and again I feel sure some of the coinage

of Half Cents was undertaken solely to keep the employees busy due to a shortage of Cent planchets. It has also been stated that the coining press for Cents was out of repair during a large part of the year.

CHAPTER 12

1807

VARIETY #1



(Early State)



(Early State)



(Late State)



(Late State)

Obverse 1 The only known 1807 obverse. The T in LIBERTY is lacking its left foot. At some time during the life of this die it became rusted and apparently was rehardened, which causes the denticles to become very faint and the fields on each of the head of Liberty to have pronounced bulges which extend vertically on both sides of the bust.

Reverse A Reverse C of 1806.

Die Breaks Obverse. An irregular crack develops from the O of the date through the 7 to the bust of Liberty.

Rarity 2 Usually available in all conditions except Uncirculated.

Condition Census UNC (7).

GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage for the calendar year as reported, 476,000 which undoubtedly includes some 1806 dated specimens.

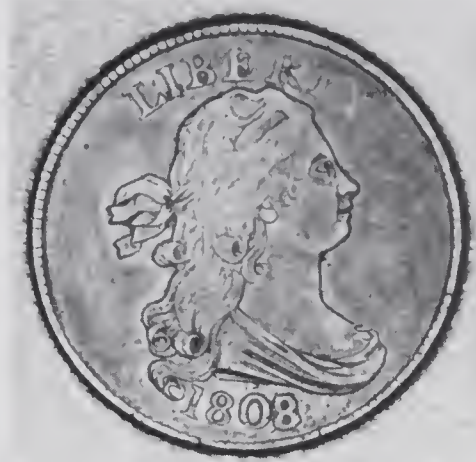
In the year 1807 the design of the Half Dollar and Half Eagle were changed to the "Classic" or "Turban Head" design by John Reich. In 1808 the remaining denominations coined that year were changed except for the "Little Half Sisters".

Again I feel that the Mint had more pressing problems so the adoption of this design by the Half Cent waited. The Mint also presumably had an 1807 obverse die which had never been used. In addition, the Mint had received another shipment of planchets from Boulton in England which, when added to those left from the 1804 shipment, totaled about 1,900,000 uncoined planchets.

CHAPTER 13

1808

VARIETY #1



Obverse 1 The 8 over 7 obverse. The upper loop of the final 8 has a flat top and a small spur at the left end. The numeral 8 on this obverse, as well as obverse 2, is of a new style in that it is not as high and is wider. The same punch was evidently used for both 8's of the date. The final 8 is punched over a 7.

Reverse A "The sloppy reverse". The arrangement of the letters in the legend is quite uneven. The main feature of this die is the leaf which is immediately below the upright of the D in UNITED.

Die Breaks Reverse. Large heavy crack from border over N in UNITED through the top of

these letters to denticle between D of UNITED and S of STATES. Second heavy crack from next denticle to S in STATES and through the tops of these letters where it ends at the E of STATES. This crack thins after the letter A. This break undoubtedly occurred due to the fact that the dies were not exactly parallel in the coining press. The weaker reverse die broke very quickly. Judging from the rarity of this striking, I doubt that it lasted for 100 coins.

Rarity 7 Discovered in 1952 by the author among a handful of worn and battered coins.

Condition Census VF (1)—G (2)—FR (2).

VARIETY #2



(RYDER)



(Rim Break) (GROSS)



(RYDER)

Obverse 1 The 8 over 7.

Reverse B There is a die flaw connecting the right stem end to the right foot of the final A in AMERICA. This can be seen even on worn specimens. The fifth outside leaf of the left branch ends between the letters E and D of UNITED. On the other reverse die, this leaf is directly under the upright of D.

Die Breaks Obverse. The rim chips out and connects with TY of LIBERTY. Another part of this crack develops which joins the tops of the let-

ters BERT. The rim chips further over the letters BE and in its final state there is a rim break from B through Y of LIBERTY.

Rarity 3 Decidedly scarcer than the following variety, but its rarity is often exaggerated. It can be occasionally picked up as a regular 1808 despite its mention in popular coin catalogues. In any condition higher than Very Fine, it is decidedly rare.

Condition Census AUNC (4)—EF (5).



Obverse 2 The "Normal 1808"; however, the final 8 appears to be made by punching two zeros from the reverse fraction punch. To me this is another indication of the low regard the Mint had for the "Little Half Sisters" of the Cent. This die is seen with rust pits in the field. The T in LIBERTY has defective feet.

Reverse B The die flaw appears weaker, probably due to wear of the die. Many of the specimens of this striking have the reverse rotated 180°.

Die Breaks Reverse. A small crack develops

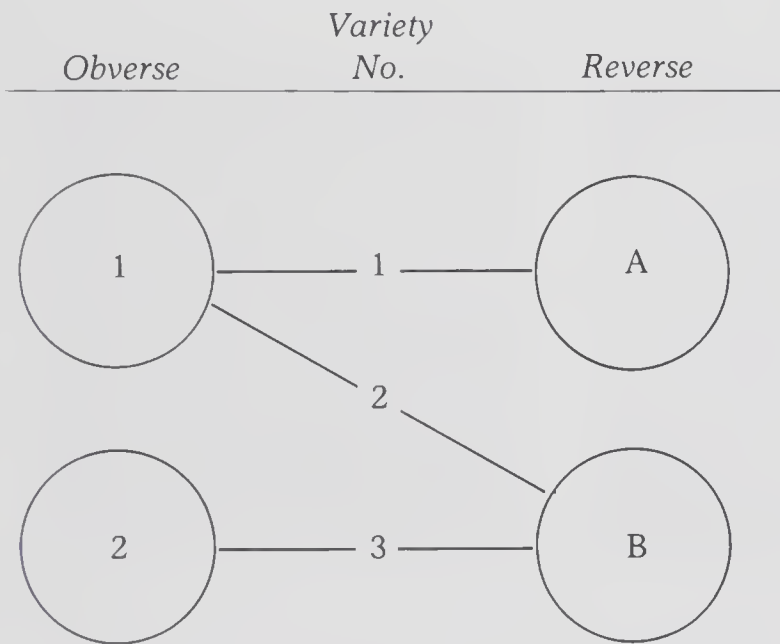
from the second inside leaf of the left branch of the wreath to the stem of the berry above it. It takes an Extremely Fine or higher specimen to see this. In the final use of this die there is a faint crack from the border through I in UNITED to wreath. This die becomes so worn in this final state that some of the berries cannot be seen even on Uncirculated specimens.

Rarity 1 Decidedly common in all conditions except Uncirculated.

Condition Census UNC (5)—AUNC (7).

1808

EMISSION SEQUENCE



KEYS TO VARIETIES

- Examine obverse and classify:
- A. Large high final 8 is #3.
 - B. Small 8—Examine reverse.
 - a. Fifth outside leaf of left branch of wreath ends between E and D of UNITED is #2.
 - b. If leaf ends under upright of D, it is #1.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage for the calendar year, 400,000; however, it was not many of the approximately 1,900,000 planchets which were on hand at the beginning of the year. I think that the officials of the Mint were concerned about this large accumulation so, in 1809, efforts appear to have been made to eliminate this situation.

1809

DESIGN DESCRIPTION Both obverse and reverse designs are changed. The obverse is the "Classic" or "Turban Head" design by John Reich. The reverse is a reduced version of the Cent design adopted in 1808. On the obverse, Liberty is facing left and is wearing a hair band with the word LIBERTY. There are seven stars to the left of the bust of Liberty and six stars to the right. The date is below the bust.

The reverse is a continuous wreath tied with a ribbon. The words UNITED STATES OF AMERICA surround the wreath. The words HALF CENT and a dash are within the wreath. The fraction 1/200 has been eliminated.

DIE PREPARATION Obverse. A hub was used to punch in the head. This hub has a defect that appears on a number of obverses. There is a line from the throat across the bust at an up-

ward 45° angle and terminates in the hair to the right of the ribbon. This is particularly noticeable on 1809 Variety #4 and 1811 Variety #1.

The engraver then punched in the stars and numerals of the date. There is a center dot below Liberty's ear. On uncirculated specimens a series of concentric lines centered at the center dot are visible particularly on the point of the bust. These are seen on obverses 1, 2, and 3 of 1809. Exactly what process is responsible for this is not known to me.

Reverse. A hub was used to punch in the wreath, the words HALF CENT and the dash. The engraver punched in the legend UNITED STATES OF AMERICA after putting in the center dot.

There will be no further comment on Design Description or Die Preparation until 1825.

VARIETY #1



Obverse 1 The curl of the bust of Liberty is over the space between the zero and 9 of the date. As there are three other dies of this date which also exhibit this feature, this die is sometimes difficult to identify. The 1 and 8 are close. The zero is high and not double punched. The zero and 9 are close. On specimens in Very Good or higher condition, the upper left star should be examined. The two left points will show evidence of being repunched.

Reverse A The high leaf of the wreath is below the final S of STATES. The point of this leaf *does not* extend beyond the S. There is a berry in the



wreath below the tail of R in AMERICA. On higher condition specimens upper and lower arcs are seen between the words of the legend UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. The letters R and I are repunched in AMERICA.

Die Breaks Reverse. A crack begins at the rim above the first A in AMERICA. This crack touches the tops of the remaining letters of that word and joins the rim again to the right of the final A.

Rarity 6 This variety was discovered by Richard Picker in 1954.

Condition Census EF (2)—VF (4)—F (2).

VARIETY #2

**Obverse 1**

Reverse B The point of the highest leaf of the wreath is just past the final S in STATES. This reverse is rotated on some specimens.

Die Breaks Obverse. A crack develops which connects the stars to the right of the bust of Liberty to the zero of the date. This crack passes through the 9 of the date. Another crack begins in the field between the border and the lower left star. This crack connects with the second star and continues through the next four stars.



Reverse. Usually seen with a faint crack connecting the tops of the letters ED STATES and reaching the border over O of OF.

Rarity 3. This coin is very scarce in a condition higher than Very Fine. In the lower grades of condition, it can usually be found unattributed. The striking of this coin is often very weak, particularly on the obverse.

Condition Census UNC (1)—AUNC (6).

VARIETY #3



Obverse 2 The curl of the bust of Liberty is directly over the zero of the date.

Reverse B Always seen with the crack mentioned in Variety #2. This reverse is also rotated on some specimens.

Die Breaks Obverse. The lower two stars on the left are sometimes connected by a thin crack.

Reverse. In addition to the crack mentioned in



Variety #2, the rim crumbles from E in UNITED to the first S in STATES, and from O of OF to the first A in AMERICA. This coin has been reported to have clash marks on some specimens.

Rarity 1 Tied with Variety #6 for the second most common variety of this date, it can usually be found in all conditions except red Uncirculated.

Condition Census UNC (7+).

VARIETY #4



(Early State)



(Early State)



(Late State)



(Late State)

Obverse 3 The zero of the date is repunched so that there appears to be a circle within the zero. The hub flaw mentioned in the section on Die Preparation is quite prominent. This flaw is sometimes referred to as a die break.

Reverse C The point of the highest leaf of the wreath is just to the left of O of OF. The point of the branch which forms the right end of the wreath is missing.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 3 Scarce in Extremely Fine or higher condition. In the lower grades of condition, this coin is almost common. This variety is listed in popular coin catalogues. Its rarity is often exaggerated. It is very often seen in the late die state so that in grading, allowances must be made for the worn dies.

Condition Census UNC (6)—AUNC (6).



(Close up of Date)



(Rim Breaks)



Obverse 4 The "Overdate." The 9 has definitely been punched over another figure. Traces of the other figure can be seen on the left side between the loop and the tail; also to the right of the lower part of the 9. Referred to in popular coin catalogues as the "9 over 6".

Reverse D The highest point of the leaf of the wreath is just to the right of the final S of STATES, which is similar to reverse B. On this reverse,

there is a dot-like defect below the final A in AMERICA.

Die Breaks Obverse. An irregular crack begins at the left border and connects with the fourth, fifth and sixth stars and the border between the sixth and seventh star. One specimen is known with two large rim breaks.

Rarity 1 The most common variety of the date.

Condition Census UNC (5)—AUNC (6).

VARIETY #6



(Early State)



(Early State)



(Late State)



(Late State)

Obverse 5 The 809 of the date follow the border so that the zero appears to be low.

Reverse E The highest point of the leaf of the wreath is about halfway between the final S of STATES and O of OF. The reverse is rotated on some specimens.

Die Breaks Obverse. The rim crumbles from about 12:30 o'clock to about 2:30 o'clock.

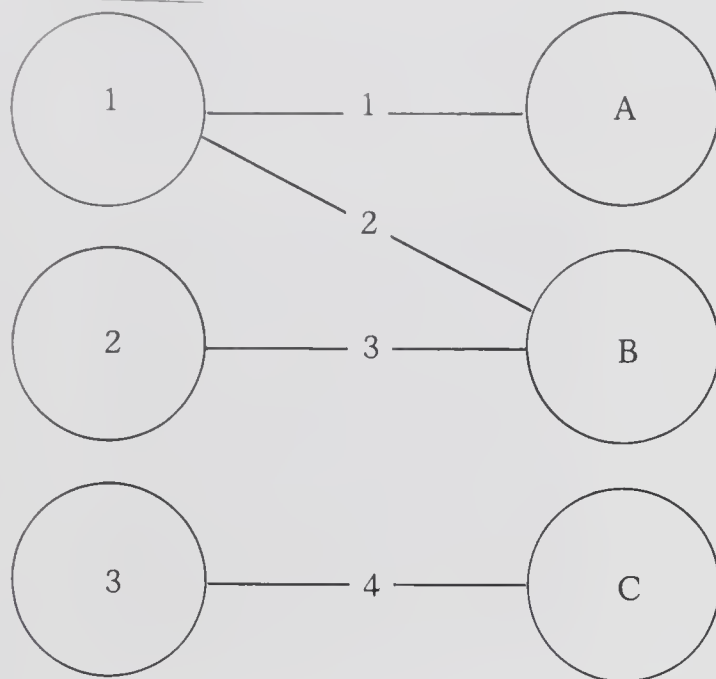
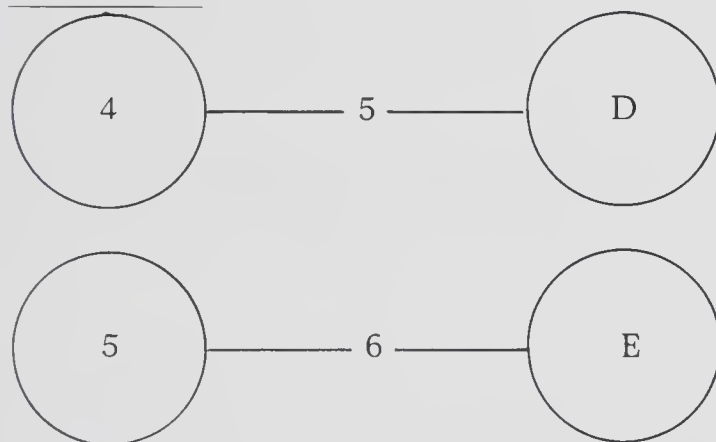
Reverse. There is a line crack connecting the tops of the letters STATES.

Rarity 1 Tied with Variety #3 as the second most common variety of this date. The striking of this coin is usually very poor on the reverse so that the letters of the legend are weak, even on Uncirculated specimens.

Condition Census UNC (4)—AUNC (8).

EMISSION SEQUENCE

Obverse	Variety No.	Reverse
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First PressSecond Press

KEYS TO VARIETIES

Examine reverse and classify:

- A. Point of highest leaf to the left of O of OF is #4.
- B. Point of highest leaf almost midway between S and O is #6.
- C. Point of highest leaf is not beyond final S of STATES is #1.
- D. Point of highest leaf is just beyond final S of STATES.

Examine obverse:

- a. Curl of bust is over zero is #3.
- b. Curl of bust is over space between zero and 9.
 - (a) Zero and 9 are close is #2.
 - (b) Zero and 9 are distant is #5.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage reported by the Mint for the calendar year is 1,154,572 which is the largest coinage in any one year for the Half Cent. As mentioned in the chapter on 1808, the Mint had approximately 1,500,000 uncoined planchets on hand at the beginning of the year. The coinage of Large Cents was only 222,867 so it is apparent that the Mint accomplished two objectives in this year. One was to keep the coining presses operating, and, second, the majority of uncoined Half Cent planchets were struck.

While the 1809 is a common date, it is not as common as the coinage would indicate. Again the question arises as to whether the coinage reported was dated 1809. Another question is the Emission Sequence; this year is a guess on my part when it comes to Varieties #4, #5, and #6 as there are no chains as on Variety #1, #2 and #3.

1810

VARIETY #1



(Early State)



(Early State)



(Late State)



(Late State)

(BEYMER)

Obverse 1 The only obverse known with this date.

Reverse A The only reverse known used with obverse 1. This die resembles reverse C of 1809 in that stem end is missing.

Die Breaks Obverse. On most specimens a crack runs from the front of the hair, over the rib-

bon, to the first three stars on the left. Another crack runs from a lump on the jaw to the hair on the right.

Reverse. one known.

Rarity 2 Generally available in all conditions except red Uncirculated.

Condition Census UNC (7+).

GENERAL COMMENTS

The Mint reports a coinage of 215,000. Specimens are occasionally seen with the reverse rotated 45° to the right. The striking of the obverse is usually weak on the right side. This results in the six stars being flat.

1811

VARIETY #1



(Two Star Break)



(Four Star Break)



Obverse 1 The wide date. The 1 and 8 of the date are wide only when compared to obverse 2. The E in LIBERTY is large and punched over a smaller E.

Reverse A The only reverse used in this year. A berry of the wreath is under the center of the first A in AMERICA.

Die Breaks Obverse. This die develops a rim break from the rim to the first and the fourth stars on the left. About one-fourth of the available specimens of this variety have the four star rim

break. This is another variety like varieties #6 and #7 of 1804 that is considered desirable to collect in their die states.

Reverse. None known, but the letters TED of UNITED and STA of STATES are weak on specimens with the obverse break.

Rarity 4 The scarcest of the two varieties of this date, and seldom available in condition higher than Fine.

Condition Census UNC (1)—EF (9).

VARIETY #2



Obverse 2 The 1 and 8 of the date are close when compared to obverse 1. The E in LIBERTY is normal sized and is punched over another E. This die has clash marks in the field at the lower right of the bust. The last two features are visible only on specimens in Very Fine or higher condition.

Reverse A The same as on Variety #1, but now warped which results in the upper left section being weak. On worn specimens the letters ED in UNITED and the word STATES are seldom seen.



Die Breaks Reverse. There is a line crack connecting the tops of OF. Another line crack has been noted running from the left end of the dash below CENT to the leaf directly below C in CENT.

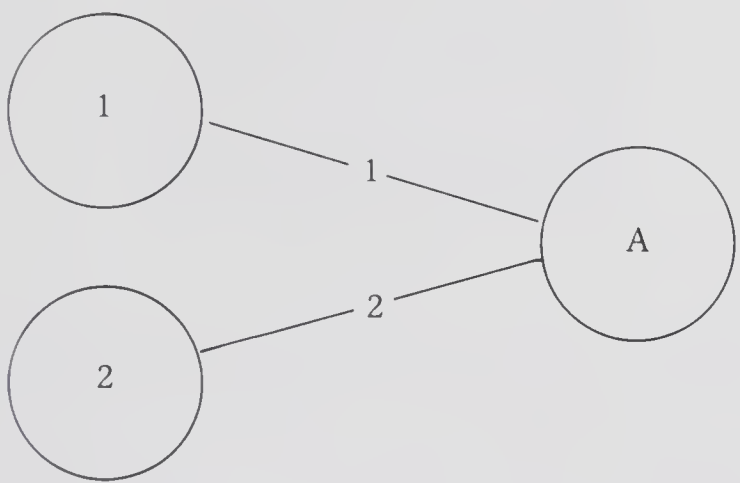
Rarity 3 Slightly more plentiful than Variety #1. Most 1811's, if not worn, are corroded. I believe this to be due to the fact that the planchets used were the last of the Boulton shipments which had been received in 1803, 1804 and 1807.

Condition Census AUNC (2)—EF (7).

1811

EMISSION SEQUENCE

Obverse	Variety No.	Reverse
---------	-------------	---------



KEYS TO VARIETIES

Examine obverse and classify:
A. Wide 18 of date and large E in LIBERTY is #1.
B. Close 18 of date and regular size E in LIBERTY is #2.

GENERAL COMMENTS

The Mint reports a coinage of 63,140 which were delivered to the Treasurer of the Mint on July 9th. This is the last coinage of Half Cents until 1825. In past writings this hiatus has been explained as being caused by the fact the banks would not accept deliveries of them due to their lack of legal tender status. It is a matter of record that the Director of the Mint, Robert L. Patterson, stopped coinage in 1811. It has also been stated that the coin was unpopular. I believe that all these reasons have merit but the most obvious one is that the Mint finally ran out of planchets and did not contract to purchase more planchets.

1825

DESIGN DESCRIPTION Identical to 1809.

DIE PREPARATION The master hubs previously used in 1811 were used to prepare the hubs which were then used to prepare the dies. The master hubs do not appear to have deteriorated to any extent during the fourteen year interval. The only defect seen is the letter L in LIBERTY, which lacks the thin portion of its horizontal line. The date numerals appear to be made from the same punches used on Half Eagle dies.

The use of master hubs of the old design has been conjectured in the past to be the result of a hasty decision brought about by an unexpected demand for the Half Cent. I do not agree with this conjecture. I base my disagreement on a letter from Boulton in England to the Mint contained in The National Archives. This letter is dated September 22, 1824 and refers to an inquiry from the Mint, dated August 10, 1824, concerning Half Cent planchets. It is obvious from this letter that the Mint contemplated coinage a full year before coin deliveries were made in the last quarter of 1825. Based on this letter, I will make a few surmises of my own.

I believe that the Director of the Mint, Robert L. Patterson, had a very low regard for the Half Cent

and ignored it. It should be noted that the letter from the Mint to Boulton was dated after Patterson's retirement and death, both which occurred in July 1824. Apparently, upon Patterson's departure from the Mint, the new Director, Dr. Samuel Moore, decided that Half Cents should be coined. As the master hubs used to prepare hubs fourteen years previously were in good condition, it was probably decided not to redesign the Half Cent the expense of preparing new master hubs being considered unnecessary.

PLANCHETS All Half Cents coined in the period 1825 through 1835 were evidently struck on prepared planchets. Boulton's letter of September 22, 1824 proposed a price for 10 tons of prepared planchets with three months allowed for delivery to Liverpool. Ten tons of planchets weighing 84 grains each would be 1,866,667 planchets. It is not known if Boulton received a contract and, if he did, the amount is not known to me.

Records in The National Archives indicate that after 1832 the Mint ceased to purchase copper planchets solely from England. Boulton was the principal supplier but there were others. It is not known as of this writing just who supplied all the Half Cent planchets for the coinage from 1825 to 1835.

The total coinage for this period is 2,205,200.

VARIETY #1



Obverse 1 The date is punched so that the curl on the bust of Liberty is above the 5. Most examples show rust marks at RT of LIBERTY.

Reverse A The only known reverse die used in 1825. On this striking the reverse sometimes is rotated 225° to the left.

Die Breaks Obverse. A thin vertical crack starts at 12 o'clock at the rim and runs through the field, the hair, the E of LIBERTY and terminates just prior to entering the field above the date. This



break is difficult to see on a worn specimen.

Rarity 3 Decidedly difficult to obtain in conditions higher than Extremely Fine.

This variety and the next variety have a peculiarity in their striking. On many specimens viewed, a small lump is seen on the edge at the position of the lower right star or the preceding star. The reason for this lump is not known but I assume it to be a defect in the collar of the coining press.

Condition Census UNC (5)—AUNC (7).

VARIETY #2



Obverse 2 The curl of the bust of Liberty is over the space between the 2 and 5. The second lowest star on the right is repunched. This is seen below the two right points of this star.

Reverse A The same die as used on Variety #1. On this die all letters of HALF CENT are repunched except C of CENT.

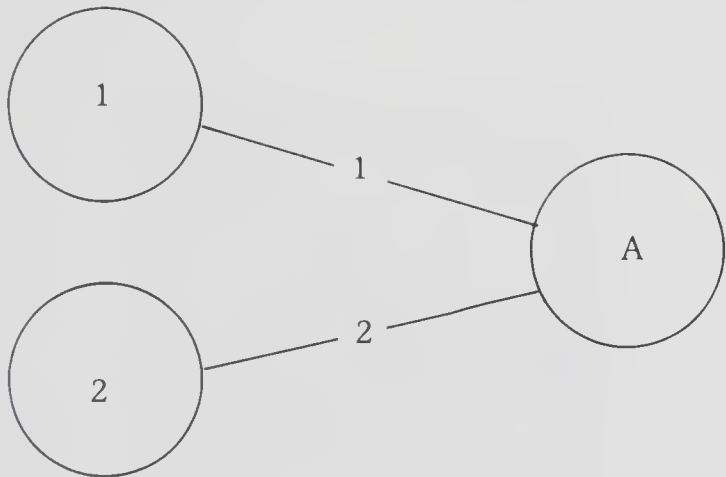
Die Breaks Obverse. There are two flaws in the die which disappear as the die is used. The first

runs from the left border through the hair of LIBERTY to the right border. The second flaw is from the left border to the point of the second star on the left.

Rarity 1 The most common variety of this date, which is sometimes touted as being rare due to the low coinage reported by the Mint for the calendar year.

Condition Census UNC (7+).

1825		
EMISSION SEQUENCE		
Obverse	Variety No.	Reverse



KEYS TO VARIETIES

Examine obverse and classify.

A. Curl of bust over 5 is #1.

B. Curl of bust over space between 2 and 5 is #2.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage is reported as 63,000 by the Mint. I believe many 1825's were included in the 1826 total of 234,000. It has been my experience that the 1825 and 1826 are of equal availability; therefore, I presume the dated 1825's coined amounted to approximately 148,000.

1826

DESIGN DESCRIPTION Identical to 1825. This basic design continues through 1835; therefore, there will be no further comment until 1849.

DIE PREPARATION Working hubs prepared from the master hubs are used for these dies; however, once the dies had received the impression of the working hub, they were retouched. In this year and in 1828, the obverse die had the pro-

file of the bust of Liberty changed. The nose was enlarged. The chin was extended slightly so as to have less of a receding effect as seen on prior uses of the hub. The L in LIBERTY lacks the thin portion of its horizontal line. The reverse had the letters HALF CENT repunched so that these letters appear to have been double cut.

There will be no further comment until 1829.

VARIETY #1



Obverse 1 The differences between the two obverse dies of this date are minute. Positive identification can be accomplished only on specimens in Very Fine or higher condition. On obverse 1 there are a series of crisscross lines to the right of the 6. On obverse 2 these lines are absent; however, on many specimens of obverse 1, these lines are faint even on higher condition coins. The reason for these marks can only be guessed as the removal of an extra numeral or star from the die.

Reverse A The point of the high leaf of the wreath is about one-third of the way beyond the final S of STATES toward the O of OF. The

punching of the legend UNITED STATES OF AMERICA is not uniform and indicates that whoever did the work was rather inexperienced.

Die Breaks Obverse. A crack runs from the point of the bust through the first star to the border, and branches through the second, third and fourth stars. There are other minor cracks which develop.

Reverse. A small crack from the ribbon end to the top of the U of UNITED is seen on most coins.

Rarity 1 Usually obtainable in all conditions except red Uncirculated.

Condition Census UNC (7+).

VARIETY #2



(Two Star Break)



Obverse 2 As noted for obverse 1, the absence of the crisscross lines is a determining feature of this die. On some specimens a small spur can be seen at the right side of the lower part of the 6 of the date. Very high condition specimens will exhibit another mark slightly below and to the right of the end of the stem of the 6. Under very high magnification these marks have been determined to be the remains of another 6 which was started in the die in a horizontal position. This die can be referred to as the 1826 over 6. This was first noticed by Jack Beymer in 1981. It is interesting that both 1826 obverse dies show marks of mistakes which were corrected.

Reverse B The point of the high leaf of the wreath is below the final S of STATES. On some specimens the reverse is rotated a full 180°. This die was later used with an 1828 obverse.

Die Breaks Obverse. The rim chips away at the fourth and fifth stars on the left. This produces a large massive break which includes the above mentioned stars. This break is now known by five specimens.

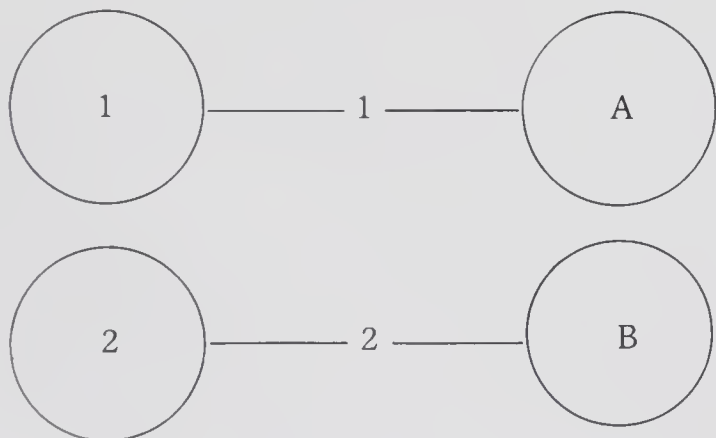
Reverse. Always seen with thorn-like projections on the left side of the wreath, which are not die breaks due to striking coins. Rather they are flaws caused by the impression of the hub in the working die during the manufacture of the working die. These flaws will fade as the die is used to strike coins.

Rarity 3 Very difficult to obtain in condition higher than Extremely Fine. High condition examples show proof-like fields.

Condition Census UNC (3)—AUNC (4).

1826
EMISSION SEQUENCE

Obverse	Variety No.	Reverse
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KEYS TO VARIETIES

Examine reverse and classify:

- A. Point of high leaf between S and O is #1.
- B. Point of high leaf below S is #2.

GENERAL COMMENTS

The Mint reports a coinage of 234,000, which apparently includes many 1825's.

1828

VARIETY #1



Obverse 1 This is the only 1828 obverse die without an easily distinguishing feature. On some specimens the right side of the second lowest star on the left has small projections. There are six stars on the right side to distinguish it from another 1828 obverse, and the date is evenly spaced to distinguish it from the other 1828 obverse.

Reverse A This is reverse B of 1826 in its later state. The thorn-like projections on the left side of



the wreath which are apparently die flaws that decrease in size with this use of the die.

Die Breaks Reverse. On some Extremely Fine or higher specimens have a thin line break connecting A of HALF with E of CENT. Also specimens have been seen with clash marks.

Rarity 3 Scarcest of the 1828 dated specimens. This variety is usually very well struck up so that the stars all have their center lines.

Condition Census UNC (7+).

VARIETY #2



Obverse 2 The twelve star variety. There are only five stars on the right side. The reason for the omission of the star can only be guessed as an error on the part of the die sinker.

Reverse B There is a berry below the left stand of M in AMERICA. On the other 1828 reverses, this berry is directly below the right stand of A in AMERICA.

Die Breaks Reverse. A break develops from the rim through the I of UNITED at a 45° angle from



(BEYMER)

the top about halfway down the letter and goes into the wreath.

Rarity 2 This coin has been known to collectors for 100 years or more and the most has been made of the missing star. In lower grades of condition there is no difficulty in locating specimens. The author has seen as many as ten in a local dealer's stock. The striking of Variety #2 is usually weak at the lower left stars. I have never seen a specimen which had all twelve stars showing their lines.

Condition Census UNC (7+).



Obverse 3 Thirteen stars as on obverse 1, but the date is uneven. The first 8 is high when compared to the 2 which is low compared to both 8's. The first 8 and the 2 are widely separated compared to the other date numerals.

Reverse C The U in UNITED appears to have been started too low, so there is a projection from the left side of that letter. This is the only 1828 reverse with this feature.

Die Breaks Reverse. The leaf above H in HALF has a thorn-like projection which occasionally

results in this die being erroneously classified as Reverse A.

Rarity 1 Common in all conditions including red Uncirculated. The reason for the plentifulness of this variety in Uncirculated condition is the "Collins Hoard". This accumulation was found in Alexandria, Virginia by an early Washington, D.C. collector and dealer named Benjamin H. Collins. He is supposed to have purchased over 1,000 specimens from an old Black woman during the 1890's.

Condition Census UNC (7+).

1828
EMISSION SEQUENCE

Obverse	Variety No.	Reverse
1	1	A
		Reverse B of 1826
2	2	B
3	3	C

KEYS TO VARIETIES

- Examine obverse and classify:
- A. Twelve stars is #2.
 - B. Thirteen stars. Examine reverse.
 - a. Point of high leaf under S is #1.
 - b. Point of high leaf past S is #3.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage reported by the Mint is 606,000 for the year.

CHAPTER 20

1829

DIE PREPARATION The retouching of the obverse die after receiving the hub impression is more evident. The jaw is fuller, the lips are larger,

and the chin juts. The receding effect is entirely eliminated. The missing horizontal line of L in LIBERTY has been hand cut in the die.

VARIETY #1



Obverse 1 The only known 1829 dated obverse. The numerals of the date are smaller than 1828, and the 2 is less ornate. The striking of this die often causes the stars to appear elongated to the border.

Reverse A Very similar to reverse C of 1828. The point of the high leaf is just beyond the final S of STATES. This is the only known reverse used in 1829.

Die Breaks Reverse. There is a large spike shaped defect from the wreath which passes through the C of CENT, the H of HALF, and term-

inates in the field above the H. This defect is very prominent on some specimens while on others it cannot be seen.

On some specimens slight ridges can be seen connecting the tops of the letters OF and ME of AMERICA. It is unknown whether the ridges are die defects which disappear with use, or die cracks.

Rarity 1 Common in all conditions except red Uncirculated.

Condition Census UNC (7+).

GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage reported by the Mint is 487,000. This number probably was in excess of the demand for the Half Cent in 1829, and explains why there was no coinage in 1830.

CHAPTER 21

1831

DIE PREPARATION The retouching of the obverse die results in a chin which juts beyond the lips; however, the downward slant of the chin produces a slight receding effect. The horizontal

line of L in LIBERTY is hand cut in the die. The date is small when compared to 1829. The rim is squared, which appears to be the result of a new type collar in the coining press.

VARIETY #1



(ATWATER)



Obverse 1 The only known 1831 dated obverse die, numerals of date are very small.

Reverse A The point of the high leaf of the wreath is below the final S of STATES. Immediately below the highest group of leaves there is a projection of the lower left side of a letter. The reason for this is unknown but it appears that an

impression was made in the die prior to the striking of the hub.

Die Breaks None known

Rarity 6 These are the business strikes and should not be confused with the proofs from the same dies which are included in Chapter 34.

Condition Census AUNC (2)—EF (2)—VF (9).

GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage reported by the Mint is 2,200 which is questionable in view of the few specimens known. The rarity of this date has been known for over 100 years, and it is doubtful that many additional specimens will be discovered unless

there is an unknown accumulation. There are a number of altered date specimens known. These have been made from 1834 coins and are easily detected as the size of that date is much larger and the stars are smaller.

1832

DIE PREPARATION The retouching of the obverse die results in a chin which juts as far out as the lips. However, the downward slant of the chin is more pronounced than in 1831 and produces a greater receding effect. The horizontal

line of the L in LIBERTY is handcut in the die. The stars are small and the date is also small as in 1831. The rim is squared and continues for the remainder of the Half Cent series.

VARIETY #1



Obverse 1 The only known 1832 dated obverse die.

Reverse A The same reverse die used in 1831.

Die Breaks Reverse. A break develops which



runs from the top of the A in STATES leftward to the border.

Rarity 2 Scarcest of the 1832's.

Condition Census UNC (7+).

VARIETY #2



Obverse 1

Reverse B The point of the high leaf of wreath is below E of STATES. The spacing of the legend is very uneven. The letters N in UNITED, E in STATES and the A's of AMERICA are all repunched.

Die Breaks Reverse. On some specimens a crack starts at the border, left of E in STATES,



and runs to the wreath after touching the left foot of the E.

Rarity 1 The most frequently encountered 1832 variety. Proofs were struck from the dies; as a result, some early business strikes will exhibit proof-like surfaces in the fields.

Condition Census UNC (7+).

**Obverse 1**

Reverse C The point of the high leaf of the wreath is below the final S of STATES on this die as well as on reverse A, so it is necessary to notice the D in UNITED, the final S in STATES, and the first A in AMERICA. All three of these letters have been repunched. The outer curve of the D in UNITED is the most prominent. The legend begins and ends distant from the ribbon and stem of the wreath when compared to reverse A. Most high

grade condition specimens of this variety will exhibit an area of rust marks from the rim below the stem of the wreath which goes leftward through the knot into the field above the wreath. This is particularly noticeable above C and E of CENT.

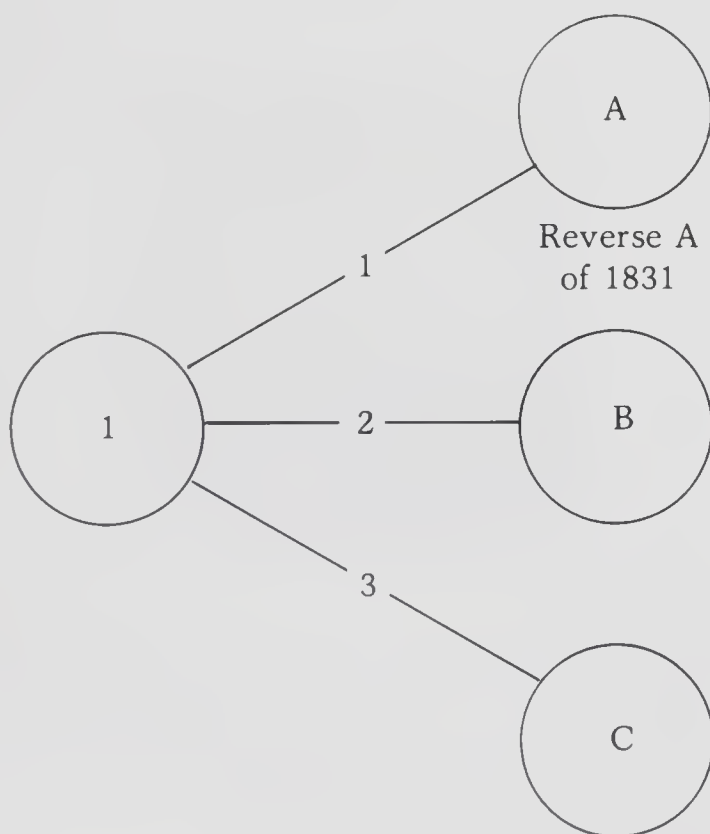
Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 1 Only slightly less common than Variety #2.

Condition Census UNC (7).

1832
EMISSION SEQUENCE

Obverse	Variety No.	Reverse
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KEYS TO VARIEITES

Examine reverse and classify:

- Point of the high leaf of wreath below S of STATES. D of UNITED not repunched is #1.
- Point of the high leaf of wreath below E of STATES is #2.
- D of UNITED repunched is #3.

GENERAL COMMENTS

The Mint reports no Half Cents delivered by the Chief Coiner in the calendar year 1832; however, records indicate that as of June 1833, 154,000 Half Cents had been coined in 1832 and 1833 to date. It is impossible to identify the number of 1832 dated specimens, but it is reasonable to assume that the majority of the 154,000 were dated 1832.

This confusion probably arises due to the fact that the Mint moved into its new building, located at Juniper and Chestnut Streets, in January 1833. It is a matter of record that the old machinery from the first Mint was moved into this new structure. Later, in 1835, the old machinery, which had been replaced, was moved back to the old Mint and sold off in 1835. I am of the opinion that the Mint looked upon the coinage of Half Cents as a task which was not deserving of their best efforts nor record keeping.

1833

DIE PREPARATION The retouching of the die results in Liberty having an even larger nose, lips, and a huge chin, (when compared to 1809), which

juts beyond the lips. The chin line is straight without any receding effect. The horizontal line of L in LIBERTY is hand cut.

VARIETY #1



Obverse 1 The only known 1833 dated obverse die. The date numerals are larger than in 1832.

Reverse A The only known 1833 reverse. The point of the high leaf of the wreath is below the left portion of the final S of STATES. This die almost always shows clash marks of the obverse die. Liberty's profile may be seen to the left of HALF CENT.



Die Breaks Obverse. A thin line crack begins in the field above Liberty's hair and connects with all the stars on the left side, except the lower one.

Rarity 1 Very common. Most specimens are in Fine or higher condition.

Condition Census UNC (7+).

GENERAL COMMENTS

This is another year when the Mint report is considered to be in error. The generally accepted amount of coinage is 120,000.

CHAPTER 24

1834

DIE PREPARATION Same as in 1833.

VARIETY #1



Obverse 1 The only known 1834 dated obverse die. Clash marks are often seen. At some time during the life of the die, the clash marks were removed by polishing the fields of the die, which results on proof-like surfaces on some specimens.

Reverse A This is the same reverse used in 1833. Clash marks are often seen and the same

comment concerning the polishing of the die applies to this reverse.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 1 Another common Half Cent, and seldom seen in very worn condition.

Condition Census UNC (7+).

GENERAL COMMENTS

Amount coined is unknown, but the generally accepted amount is 141,000.

1835

DIE PREPARATION This is the last use of the 1809 master hubs except for the "proof-only" date of 1836. The profile of Liberty is the same as in 1833 and 1834; however, the horizontal line of

the L in LIBERTY was not hand cut. This letter is now separated into two pieces in a manner similar to 1825, 1826 and 1828.

VARIETY #1



Obverse 1 The only dated 1835 obverse. The date is much smaller than in 1833 and 1834. This die is usually seen with clash marks of the wreath below the bust of Liberty.

Reverse A This is the same reverse used in 1833 and 1834, and again clash marks are often seen.



Some specimens exhibit multiple clash marks.

Die Breaks None known.

Rarity 1 Common in all conditions higher than Good, including red Uncirculated.

Condition Census UNC (7+).

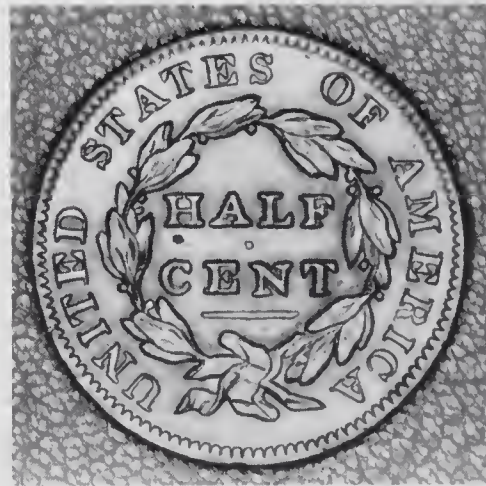
VARIETY #2



Obverse 1 Now repolished to remove clash marks from its use with reverse A. However, the die clashes again but the position of the marks differ from those on its use prior to the repolishing.

Reverse B This reverse differs slightly from reverse A. The main feature is the distance between the letters ST of STATES. On reverse B, these letters are close when compared to reverse A.

Die Breaks Reverse. An arc-like crack runs from the left border above D in UNITED through the wreath, the letters H and A of HALF, the wreath again, the right side of O of OF to the border. Another crack runs from the border

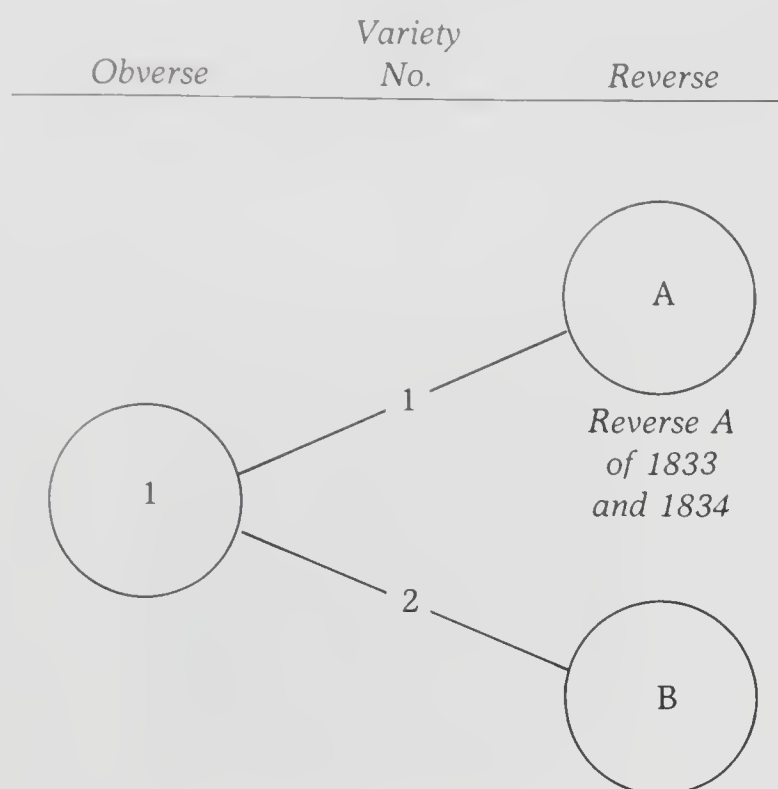


through R in AMERICA to the wreath. Still another thin crack starts at the top of E in AMERICA and runs through the remaining letters and terminates at the border below the left ribbon of the wreath. There are clash marks which can be mistaken for further breaks, but these marks are an outline of the obverse bust of Liberty and can usually be traced.

Rarity 1 Common in all conditions higher than Good. This coin and the preceding variety were found in an accumulation of approximately 1,000 Uncirculated specimens about 1925.

Condition Census UNC (7+).

 1835
 EMISSION SEQUENCE



 KEYS TO VARIETIES

Examine reverse and classify:

- A. If S and T of STATES are distant it is #1.
 B. If S and T of STATES are close it is #2.

 GENERAL COMMENTS

A coinage of 398,000 which was reported for the year 1836, is considered to be correct for this date. At the conclusion of the 1835 dated coinage, in 1836 the Mint had a surplus on hand which was to last for thirteen years. Records in The National Archives indicate the following inventories were on hand:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Number</u>
January 29, 1837	452,500
September 30, 1839	406,050
December 31, 1840	402,200
September 22, 1841	371,710
December 31, 1842	330,400
September 30, 1843	267,100
December 31, 1844	174,952
December 31, 1845	149,594
June 30, 1846	135,560
September 30, 1847	102,956
March 31, 1848	95,544
June 30, 1848	88,848
September 30, 1848	70,258
June 30, 1849	30,900
September 29, 1849	24,778
December 31, 1849	32,020

It is obvious from the above data that the 1849 coinage was the first struck for general circulation after 1836.

1849

DESIGN DESCRIPTION Obverse. The "Mature Head" design by Christian Gobrecht, which was first used on Large Cent in 1843. There are Half Cents, in proof condition, with this design bearing dates as early as 1840. (See Chapter 34).

Reverse. The same design and style as the Large Cent starting in 1843, consisting of the legend UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, surrounding a continuous wreath and the words HALF CENT within the wreath.

DIE PREPARATION Obverse. A hub was used for the entire die except for the date, which was separately punched.

Reverse. Entire die was prepared by the use of a hub.

Some specimens of this and previous designs will show double outlines of the obverse and/or reverse die. It is believed that this is caused by vibrations of the die or dies at the moment of striking.

PLANCHETS Records in The National Archives disclose that Crocker & Brothers of Taunton, Massachusetts supplied prepared planchets starting in November 1849. These planchets are smaller and thicker than in 1835 but the weight, 84 grains, is the same.

VARIETY #1



Obverse The date is very large. The 1 overlaps the point of the bust. The 8 and the 4 touch the curl above these figures. The 9 does not touch any device.

Reverse There are no distinguishing features to separate the dies if more than one was used. This is due to the fact that the dies were struck from a hub which had the complete design. Any differ-



ence on these dies would be damage to the die after receiving the impression of the hub.

Rarity 2 The greater majority of these coins are in at least Very Good condition. Red Uncirculated specimens, not recolored, are extremely rare. Many of this date are weakly struck. Some specimens are known with the reverse rotated 90°.

Condition Census UNC (7+).

GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage reported is 39,864, all of which were struck and delivered in November and December of 1849.

CHAPTER 27

1850

DESIGN DESCRIPTION Same as 1849.

DIE PREPARATION Same as 1849.

PLANCHETS Same as 1849.

The above three headings are the same for general circulation coins struck during the 1850's, so there will be no further comment.

VARIETY #1



Obverse The numerals of the date are small when compared to 1849.

Reverse The same comment as on 1849.



Rarity 2 This coin is very scarce in original red Uncirculated. Many coins are weakly struck.

Condition Census UNC (7+).

GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage for the year, 39,812.

1851

VARIETY #1



Obverse The date is small and traces of a second 1 can be seen to the right of the final 1 of the date.

Reverse No distinguishing feature on this hub-stamped die, which may have been used in a prior year or years.

Rarity 1 The most common of the "Mature Head" Half Cents. Original red Uncirculated specimens are known.

Condition Census UNC (7+).

GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage for the year, 147,672, which appears to have been enough for the demand until 1853.

1853

VARIETY #1



Obverse Large numerals in date similar to 1849.

Reverse The same hub was used to prepare the die or dies used this year, and no distinguishing marks are known.

Rarity 1 Another coin which is very rare in original red Uncirculated condition. The quality of most strikes is rather poor.

Condition Census UNC (7+).

GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage reported is 129,694.

1854

VARIETY #1



Obverse A small date with a slanting 5. The hub which was used for the "Mature Head" Half Cent dies had a small defect in the hair to the lower right of the ear which, on this die, is repaired with the use of the graver. The hub defect can be seen on all the other "Mature Head" Half Cents as it is not repaired.

Reverse On some examples of this date, the I in UNITED has a lump near its top. The lump is very minute and requires at least a 10-power glass to be

seen. It is not known whether the pit which causes the lump was on the same die which struck perfect specimens, or whether it is an entirely new die.

Rarity 1 A common coin in condition of Fine and higher. Numerous red Uncirculated specimens are known. This coin is usually well struck with the obverse stars and both obverse and reverse border rims well defined.

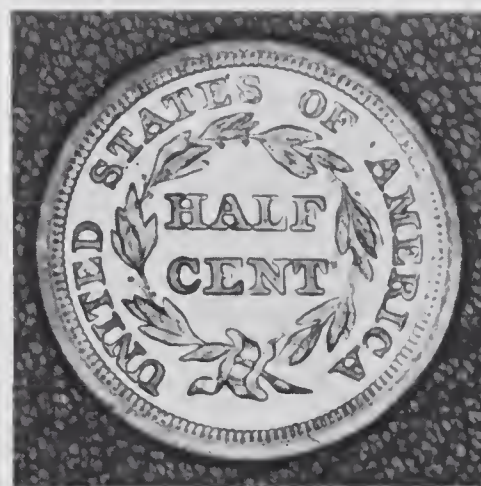
Condition Census UNC (7+).

GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage reported is 55,358.

1855

VARIETY #1



Obverse A small date with both 5's slanting.

Reverse The usual hub prepared die with a line in the field from the left serif of E in AMERICA to a denticle.

Rarity 1 Another common coin and like the

1854, is usually in at least Fine condition and available in red Uncirculated. The striking of most specimens is not as well defined as on the 1854.

Condition Census UNC (7+).

GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage reported is 56,500.

CHAPTER 32

1856

VARIETY #1



Obverse A small date with an upright 5.

Reverse The usual hub prepared die which was previously used in 1854. All 1856's which I have examined have the lump at the top of the I of UNITED. The size of the lump varies depending on the striking pressure used by the coining press. On some specimens it is very faint which has

resulted in two varieties being listed for this date in the past.

Rarity 1 Seldom seen in lower than Fine condition red Uncirculated specimens are of the same availability as 1854 and 1855.

Condition Census UNC (7+).

GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage reported is 40,430.

1857

VARIETY #1



Obverse A large date when compared to 1854-1856, but smaller than 1849 and 1853.

Reverse The usual hub prepared die with a small dot on the right side at A in AMERICA.

Rarity 2 Very few specimens of this date are found in worn condition. The greater majority which were released for circulation must have

been saved due to the Half Cent's discontinuance. Mint Director Snowden reported that many of this date were melted and not released for circulation. Numerous red Uncirculated specimens are known.

Condition Census UNC (7+).

GENERAL COMMENTS

Coinage reported is 35,180.

--- **“Other Half Cents”** ---

The Notes as to Arrangement of Chapters of this book stated that this chapter would contain descriptions of those pieces of metal which have the words HALF CENT on them which are not coins struck for circulation by the U.S. Mint. This description can be divided into categories.

The first category will be the mint prepared proofs and will include what are presently known as original and restrike specimens.

The thought of preparing better examples of the Mints products seems to have occurred as soon as the Mint commenced operations. In the year 1796 all denominations were coined. The idea has been advanced that presentation sets were prepared in that year due to a number of well struck specimens being known. No such sets are identifiable today as they must have been broken up for individual examples, if they were indeed made.

The preparation of proof coins consisted of polishing the planchet prior to striking and polishing the flat surface of the dies. It should be noted that the dies have the reverse impression of the coin struck so that a polishing of the die will produce a polished surface in the lowest area of a coin i.e. the fields. The dies used for proof strikings are assumed to have been done when they were first made so as to give the sharpest impressions on the proof.

The U.S. Mint produced its first coins by the proof process in 1817. By the time Half Cent coinage resumed in 1825, it was an established practice. The distribution of these proofs seems to have been left to the discretion of the Chief Coiner. At that time it was Adam Eckfeldt. There has been a great deal more speculation about proof Half Cents since numismatic research began in The National Archives as to when the proofs were struck and under what circumstances.

Adam Eckfeldt retired from the position of Chief Coiner in 1839 and was replaced by Franklin Peale who, in turn, was replaced in 1854

by George Childs. Because of various accusations of profiteering against Franklin Peale, it appears that in 1854 control over the distribution of proof coins was taken from the Chief Coiner and placed with the then Director of the Mint, James R. Snowden. This sequence of events, I believe, has a definite bearing on the proof Half Cents. Thus the writer will now toss his four Half Cents (two cents) worth of speculation in this numismatic controversy which, as noted in my section on the History of Half Cent Collecting, has been going on for almost a century.

In order to identify the Mint prepared proofs being set forth I have devised a system which uses first, the initial of the Chief Coiner or the Director of the Mint (i.e. E for Eckfeldt, P for Peale and S for Snowden), second, an O for Original or R for Restrike followed by a number and, if applicable, a small letter such as "a" to denote a die state. An example of this will be the proof currently referred to as the 1836 "original." My system identifies this proof as #EO-12. All proofs will have a designation given.

Prior identification of these proofs has been somewhat confusing to me. The proofs of dies which were used for circulation strikes have been considered to be a superior grade, one step above uncirculated. The Proof-only dates are termed original and restrike, with the identifying feature to be large or small berries on the reverse. The small berries are then broken down into First and Second restrikes. The terms First and Second restrike are also applied to 1831 and 1836 but the criteria are different. The First restrike of these dates have the large berries of the 1836 reverse and not the small berries of the First restrike for the years 1840-1849 and 1852.

The terminology is in this situation due to the accumulation of data that has been published over the years. In the last thirty years of the 19th century, the proof-only dates were classified only

on the basis of whether large or small berries were present. A good example of this is Frossard's 1879 Monograph. In the 1924 Alvord Sale the same system was used but the 1831 and 1836 were classified into restrikes based on the 1916 Gilbert Book. This situation continued until 1953 when the "Coin Collectors Journal" a publication of Wayte Raymond of New York contained a series of articles entitled "Proof Coins Struck by the United States Mint 1817-1921". This article noted the differences in the restrikes and this data

was added. This data also appeared in another Wayte Raymond publication, "The Standard Catalogue of United States Coins". The Empire Guide merely listed the "Originals" and "Restrikes First or Second" in their date order which as noted in my "Notes as to Arrangement of Chapters" is the historical and usual method of classifying United States coins. Thus, the order of identification which I am setting forth is an attempt to give a chronological method of identification which is not tied to the "Date Order" system.

Adam Eckfeldt—1825-1839

The proofs prepared during this period consisted of proofs struck from dies used for busi-

ness strikes and one exception; the coin which is referred to as the 1836 "Original" #EO-12.



Obverse 1



Reverse A

It should be noted on this proof that both of these dies were new. They were not used in prior years nor on business strikes. I believe the 1836 dies were prepared for coinage in that year but not used as the 1835 dies lasted until the supply of prepared planchets for business strikes was exhausted in 1836. These dies, however, were used to strike proofs as it had been the practice in prior years to do so before making business strikes.

The following additional proofs are known from dies which were used for business strikes during this period.

(as these coins are illustrated in the chapter on each date they are not shown here)

- #EO-1 —1825 Variety #2
- #EO-2 —1826 Variety #1
- #EO-3 —1828 Variety #3
- #EO-4 —1829
- #EO-5 —1831
- #EO-6 —1832 Variety #1
- #EO-7 —1832 Variety #2
- #EO-8 —1833
- #EO-9 —1834
- #EO-10—1835 Variety #1
- #EO-11—1835 Variety #2

Franklin Peale—1839-1854

The Half Cent proofs made during this period are somewhat harder to determine. Apparently the demand for proof coins by collectors was a factor in their coinage. It is known that the Mint produced coins to exchange with collectors so that the Mints collection of coins would receive specimens that were desired. The Mint also during this period, produced proof sets which were cased. The sets included the Half Cent even though they were not being struck for circulation.

It is the writer's opinion that dates starting with 1840 through 1854 were made in proof while Franklin Peale was Chief Coiner. However, different reverses were used during this period. Accordingly the following numbers are set forth:

- #PO- 1—1840,—Reverse B
- #PO- 2—1841,—Reverse B
- #PO- 3—1842,—Reverse B
- #PO- 4—1843,—Reverse B
- #PO- 5—1844,—Reverse B
- #PO- 6—1845,—Reverse B
- #PO- 7—1846,—Reverse B
- #PO- 8—1847,—Reverse B
- #PO- 9—1848,—Reverse B
- #PO-10—1849, (small date)—Reverse B
- #PO-11—1849, (large date)—Reverse C—
(Circulation Dies)
- #PO-12—1850, Reverse C—(Circulation Dies)
- #PO-13—1851, Reverse C—(Circulation Dies)
- #PO-14—1854, Reverse C—(Circulation Dies)



Obverse
2
1840



Obverse
3
1841



Obverse
4
1842



Obverse
5
1843



Obverse
6
1844



Obverse
7
1845

"OTHER HALF CENTS"



Obverse
8
1846



Obverse
9
1847



Obverse
10
1848



Obverse
11
1849
(small date)

The above photographs show the obverse dies used for proof only specimens which are #PO-1 through #PO-10. The proof specimens, #PO-11

through #PO-14 are struck from obverse dies that were used for circulation strikes and are illustrated in their respective chapters.



Reverse
B



Reverse
C

Reverse B. The large berry reverse. After receiving the impression from the first hub this die was retouched by having ten of the eleven berries in the wreath enlarged in size. This was evidently done with a punch and why the final berry was not punched is not known. The ribbon does not loop into the field, rather it goes at a right angle to the viewers left.

Reverse C. This die has not had its berries enlarged and the ribbon loops into the field. It is the normal second hub prepared die as seen on circulation Half Cents starting in 1849.

There are four identifiable reverses prepared from two hubs and used on proof coinage but it appears to me that only two reverses were used in this period. The hubs used to prepare the dies differ slightly. The most noticeable difference is the angle which the ribbon turns above the wreath. On the first hub it goes to the left at a right angle and does not protrude into the field. On the second hub the ribbon loops into the field.

It should be noted that 1853 has not been mentioned. The writer has never seen or had reported a proof of this date. If such a coin exists it presumably would be struck from the dies which were used for business strikes. Another "ghost" coin of this period is the 1852 "original" which will be reviewed in a later section on the proofs struck after 1854.

The question of restrikes during the period Franklin Peale was Chief Coiner is one that the writer can only guess at. A restrike is defined as a coin produced in a later year than the date which the coin bears. While Peale was in office there was a growing demand from persons for proof specimens. Some of the accusations of profiteering against Peale had to do with his proof and medal business. For this writing I am going to assume that Peale did make restrikes of Half Cents in proof and that the demand was for dates 1831 and 1836.

Apparently the Mint had the 1831 obverse die which had had very little use. The 1831 reverse die had been used in 1832 for business strikes and discarded. The Mint also had the 1836 obverse and reverse dies. The following restrikes are presumed to have been struck from these dies in the following order:

#PR-1 1836 Obverse 1 with 1836 Reverse A Wire-like rim neither die cracked or warped.

#PR-1a 1836 Obverse 1 now warped with 1836 Reverse A not cracked. Wire-like rim on Obverse and Reverse.

#PR-2 1831 Obverse with 1836 Reverse A Wire-like rim on Reverse.

#PR-2a 1831 Obverse now warped with 1836 Reverse A Wire-like rim on Reverse.



#PR-2b 1831 Obverse now warped with 1836 Reverse A. Now badly cracked with wire-like rims.

Director of the Mint
James R. Snowden—1855-18?

The original proofs of Half Cents in this period cover only the years 1855, 1856 and 1857 all of which were struck from the dies which were used for business strikes. Accordingly, the numbering system identifies them as: #SO-1 1855

#SO-2 1856

#SO-3 1857

The restrikes present a problem as 1857 apparently did not stop the minting of them. These were made at the Mint solely to satisfy the demands of collectors until some time in the 1860's. This demand had increased due to the popular project of obtaining a coin of each date from circulation. These collectors noted that there were

gaps in the Half Cent date series compared to the large cent series, i.e., 1798, 1799, 1801, 1812-1824, 1827, 1830, 1836-1848 and 1852. It was also noted that 1831 was virtually impossible to find. Officials of the Mint, not now specifically identified, apparently decided to meet the demand.

Obverse dies were available for 1831, 1836, 1840 through 1849, 1852, 1856 and 1857. However, it was necessary to make reverse dies as the only one available was the large berry reverse (identified as Reverse B previously) which would not last if any large amount of striking was done. The two Reverse dies prepared from the second hub were:



Reverse D. This reverse is a second hub prepared die with small berries. Its identifying feature is the doubling of the lower right. This is caused by a slight shifting of the hub on the piece

of metal receiving the impression of the hub which will become the die. The doubling is most easily seen on the ribbon tying the wreath and the letters NT of CENT.



Reverse E. This second hub prepared die has small berries. The distinguishing feature of this die is a number of lines at a 45° angle in the field from the denticles to the tops of RICA in AMERICA.

Identifying these reverses requires a strong glass of at least 10 power and a great deal of patience.

The restrikes made in this period consisted of the dated obverses combined with the reverses listed below. The order of emission is not known for each obverse.

Reverse B*

#SR- 1—1852

Reverse D

#SR- 2—1840

#SR- 3—1841

#SR- 4—1842

#SR- 5—1843

#SR- 6—1844

#SR- 7—1845

#SR- 8—1846

#SR- 9—1847

#SR-10—1848

#SR-11—1849

#SR-12—1852

#SR-13—1856

#SR-14—1857 (with date repunched)

Reverse E

#SR-15—1831 (with warped obverse)

#SR-16—1836 (with warped obverse)

#SR-17—1840

#SR-18—1841

#SR-19—1842

#SR-20—1843

#SR-21—1844

#SR-22—1845

#SR-23—1846

#SR-24—1847

#SR-25—1848

#SR-26—1852



Obverse 12
1852

The origin of the 1852 dated obverse is a matter of conjecture. It could have been made in 1852 for proof and/or circulation coinage. It could have been made later when Reverse dies D and E were made. This brings up the controversial issue of the 1852 "original." Frossard stated in his 1879 Monograph that the 1852 "original" had small berries. He also plated the 1852 obverse with a small berry reverse. In studying the plate I have not been able to determine which small berry reverse was used for the plate and there is no way to determine the obverse date of coin plated.

The controversy was first raised at the 1894 Convention of the American Numismatic Association. Mr. George A. Rice presented a paper which was printed in the February 1895 issue of the "Numismatist". His subject was the then manner of classifying this date into originals and restrikes as set forth in Frossard's 1879 Monograph. Mr. Rice had 1852 Half Cents with both large and small berry reverses. He also stated that "One of these is an original and the other a restrike, but which is which?" This statement by Mr. Rice—that there were "original" 1852's, has led to an 87 year search that has not ended. Mr. Rice reasoned that since Frossard had written that the small berry reverse was an "original"; thus the large berry specimen must be a restrike. He reasoned further that all large berry reverses of the 1840's were restrikes. Any reader who has gotten to this point realizes that I do not agree with this generalization in regard to the status of which is an original and which is a restrike.

*The restrikes made with Reverse B include some of the obverses of 1840 through 1849 even though I have not listed them above. These die combinations were previously used for the proofs identified as #PO-1 through #PO-10. These proofs exist as both originals and restrikes which cannot be separated. This thought has been advanced in the past and attempts to separate these have been based on die wear. The rarity of all proofs struck with Reverse B whether original or restrike, is such that not more than 600 impressions could have been made from this die. I do not believe that there would be appreciable die wear for this number of strikes. The difference noted in the past as to sharpness of strikes could be attributable to striking pressure of the coinage press or the weight of the planchet.

Mr. Rices's closing comment will be of some interest to present day collectors.

"Now, Gentlemen, there should be some way of getting at the facts of this matter, and having it settled beyond a doubt, for if we are paying from twenty to fifty dollars each for restrikes we ought to know it."

The August 1906 issue of the "Numismatist" had an article by Charles Steigerwalt in regard to the question of the 1852 "original" which stated "That the large berry reverse was the one originally used does not admit of question." He then states that there are a number of probable solutions but reaches no conclusion other than the one quoted above. There appeared in subsequent issues of 1906 and 1907 some more comments but then the subject disappears from print. The 1916 Gilbert book merely followed Steigerwalt and no mention of the controversy appears. The April 1917 issue of the "Numismatist" contained Dr. George R. Ross' concluding article on varieties and covered the years 1849 to 1857. The 1852 was listed as having the small berry reverse as the "original" and the large berry reverse as the "restrike" but no reasoning for this conclusion. In the March 1933 issue of the "Numismatist" Howard R. Newcomb, the well known Large Cent collector, addressed himself to the differences in the ribbon tying the wreath of the Half Cent. This article merely pointed out that the ribbon on the large berry reverse was not of the type ever used on Large Cents. No reference to the prior controversy over 1852 was indicated. Apparently the thinking of the era was that the Gilbert book was the final word even though apparently no original thought on this subject had gone into it.

This controversy was revived in 1953 by Wayte Raymond in his "Coin Collectors' Journal" and "The Standard Catalogue of United States Coins". These publications first set forth the division of the restrikes into identifiable dies (Reverses D and E in this book). The 1852 "original" proof reverse was set forth as having small berries but not a restrike reverse. Rather it was concluded that there was a second hub reverse similar to the circulation strikes of the 1849-1857 type. The editorial consultant who wrote this based his conclusions on a single 1852 proof set which had appeared in both the Cleneay (1890) and the Winsor (1895) sales. This proof set remains unlocated to-

day. It could possibly give a further clue to settle this 87 year old matter provided the Half Cent is the one that was placed in it in 1852. The Half Cent is identified as having small berries. The editorial consultant in reaching his conclusion was apparently applying some of his astrology for which he was noted.

The controversy had another twist added with the 1962 Empire Guide. The "original" 1852 reverse was identified as having large berries and struck from a sharp unworn die. The three restrikes were identified as the two small berry reverses and another having the impression of the large berry die which was worn and repolished.

For this work I have ASSUMED that the 1852 "original" *does not exist*. The known specimens are all classified as restrikes and are identified as #SR-1, #SR-12 and #SR-26. Only time will tell as to the correctness or incorrectness of my assumption. Some readers may regard this as a "temptest in a teapot" but, to those who are interested, it has been for many years a never ending subject.

Taken as a whole, these proof Half Cents present an interesting sidelight of this denominations history. Collectors today, as well as in the past, consider them "part of the family". A reviewer of the First Edition of this book stated that I had "relegated the proof-only dates to second class citizenship." Perhaps this is again true as I still do not collect them. However, in the ten years since I last wrote, I have had ample opportunity to examine and purchase them. I have conversed and corresponded with persons interested in them.

I believe that Don Taxay in writing "Scotts Comprehensive Catalogue and Encyclopedia of U.S. Coins" stated my view of the proofs by stating "The term proof does not signify a premium condition one step above uncirculated, but a special coinage."

Perhaps my present treatment of them is the result of a maturing process that occurs as one becomes familiar with something that was unknown in the past. Hopefully my prior reviewer will state that I have restored them to their (W)rightful place.

All of the proofs whether original or restrikes are rare (Rarity 5, 6 or 7). I will leave to the future, the task of assigning specific rarity numbers as I have not kept extensive records of them.



The next and second category of "Other Half Cents" is the 1856 essay or, as it is usually termed, the trial piece.

The planchets are made of the copper-nickel alloy which was used for the Cents during the period 1857 to 1864. Fifty specimens are recorded as being struck to demonstrate this alloy in 1856, when Congress was debating the new Small Cent. This piece is considered to be R-5 today (more than 30 specimens known).

The weight of the planchets used was approximately 72 grains and were not as thick as the normal (84 grain) copper planchet. The alloy is 88% copper and 12% nickel. This alloy is harder than pure copper. It is assumed that the coining presses striking pressure was adjusted for this factor which resulted in strikings that the rims and denticles are not fully struck up. (Compare with the strikings of the 1854).

It has also been reported that another alloy of

90% copper and 10% nickel was used in striking these essays. The differences being that these specimens weigh 69 grains. This difference seems to be almost too picayune to be mentioned but for the sake of completeness I have done so.

In my first edition of this book, I also listed 1854 in this category. In 1975 one of these was in an auction sale. The successful bidder was unsure of the coin even though it had an impressive chain of ownership back to a well known collection ("Anderson-Dupont"). Upon further examination, the specimen in question, was proven to be a regular 1854 proof which had tarnished to the color of the copper-nickel essay. Accordingly, there is one specimen remaining to determine the genuineness thereof. This coin was last heard from in the 1950's and was part of the King Farouk collection which was sold by the Egyptian Government in 1954.



The third category is the 1811 Restrike. This item was struck outside of the Mint, using the dies of 1811 obverse 2 and 1802 reverse B. Both dies were quite rusty when the Restrikes were made. J.J. Mickley, an early coin collector supposedly had six specimens struck about 1858. The dies had been acquired after the Mint had sold



them for junk. In 1878 the U.S. Government reacquired the dies from the Mickley Estate. At the present time the location of six specimens is known. A collector need not worry about having a Restrike sold to him as an original since the present market price of the Restrike is in excess of a Mint coined 1811.



The fourth category is the 1837 token. This item, which has been included in popular albums and coin catalogues, properly belongs in a collection of Hard Times Tokens. It is known as Low #49. This token is interesting in that it was struck



privately, and circulated during the Depression of 1837 at a time when the Mint had over 400,000 unissued Half Cents. Collectors should have no trouble in acquiring this item as it is relatively common.



(The "Dr. Edwards" Struck Facsimile)
(Electrotypes also exist)

The fifth and final category is Electrotypes, Casts and Other Facsimiles. These were mentioned in the chapter on 1796, which is the usual date encountered. There are other dates known, such as 1793, 1794, 1802, 1831, 1836, 1840-1849 and 1852.

When I first started to collect Half Cents by dates, I noticed that coin catalogues had many dates with the notations, "Proofs Only" or "Restrike". The prices of these were quite high but, as most new collectors do, I was following the catalogue.

Shortly thereafter I bid on an 1843 which was described in an auction catalogue as being in Good condition. I received the coin for about 30 per cent of my bid. Far from being in Good condition, it seemed to me it was in Very Fine condition. This just didn't make sense but, as I sat at

my desk contemplating the problem, I accidentally dropped the coin. I heard a dull thud. I then examined the coin's edge and it turned out to be an electrotpe. Needless to say, I returned it.

This incident occurred back in the "good old days", January, 1949 to be exact, but I still see these items available from the usual coin sources. Recently I was examining a choice condition 1802 Variety #2 which another collector had acquired. The thought that it was an electrotpe never entered my mind. I was quite surprised by this fact when the owner told me. I had not checked for this idea but, upon examining the edge, there was no question that it was an electrotpe. Collectors should always check for this possibility, particularly due to the high prices of many Half Cents.

Table of Equivalents

Business Strikes

Date	Variety #	Gilbert No.
1793	1	4
	2	3
	3	1
	4	2
1794	1a	9
	1b	-
	2a	5
	2b	-
	3a	7
	3b	-
	4a	4
	4b	-
	5a	8
	5b	-
	6a	6
	6b	-
	7	2
	8	3
	9	1
1795	1	1
	2a	3
	2b	8
	3	7
	4	4
	5a	6
	5b	6
	6a	5
	6b	-
1796	1	2
	2	1
1797	1	4
	2	3
	3a	2
	3b	1
	3c	-
1800	1	1
1802	1	2
	2	1
1803	1	2
	2	4
	3	3
	4	1
1804	1	6
	2	-
	4	10
	5	11
	6	8
	7	9
	8	7

Date	Variety #	Gilbert No.
1804	9	5
	10	4
	11	1
	12	3
	13	2
1805	1	1
	2	4
	3	3
	4	2
1806	1	1
	2	2
	3	-
	4	3
1807	1	1
1808	1	-
	2	1
	3	2
1809	1	-
	2	3
	3	4
	4	1
	5	5
	6	2
1810	1	1
1811	1	2
	2	1
1825	1	2
	2	1
1826	1	1
	2	2
1828	1	2
	2	3
	3	1
1829	1	1
1831	1	-
1832	1	2
	2	1
	3	3
1833	1	1
1834	1	1
1835	1	2
	2	1
1849	1	3
1850	1	1
1851	1	1
1853	1	1
1854	1	1
1855	1	1
1856	1	1
1857	1	1

Proof Strikes

Variety #	Proof-only Die Combination	Previous Designation
EO-1	-	1825 Proof
EO-2	-	1826 Proof
EO-3	-	1828 Proof
EO-4	-	1829 Proof
EO-5	-	1831 Proof
EO-6	-	1832 Proof
EO-7	-	1832 Proof
EO-8	-	1833 Proof
EO-9	-	1834 Proof
EO-10	-	1835 Proof
EO-11	-	1835 Proof
EO-12	1-A	1836 Original
PO-1	2-B	1840 Original
PO-2	3-B	1841 Original
PO-3	4-B	1842 Original
PO-4	5-B	1843 Original
PO-5	6-B	1844 Original
PO-6	7-B	1845 Original
PO-7	8-B	1846 Original
PO-8	9-B	1847 Original
PO-9	10-B	1848 Original
PO-10	11-B	1849 Original
PO-11	-	1849 Original (small date) 1849 Proof (large date)
PO-12	-	1850 Proof
PO-13	-	1851 Proof
PO-14	-	1854 Proof
SO-1	-	1855 Proof
SO-2	-	1856 Proof
SO-3	-	1857 Proof

Variety #	Proof-only Die Combination	Previous Designation
PR-1	1-A	1836 First Restrike
PR-2	1831 Circulation Obverse-A	1831 First Restrike
SR-1	12-B	1852 Original
SR-2	2-D	1840 First Restrike
SR-3	3-D	1841 First Restrike
SR-4	4-D	1842 First Restrike
SR-5	5-D	1843 First Restrike
SR-6	6-D	1844 First Restrike
SR-7	7-D	1845 First Restrike
SR-8	8-D	1846 First Restrike
SR-9	9-D	1847 First Restrike
SR-10	10-D	1848 First Restrike
SR-11	11-D	1849 First Restrike
SR-12	12-D	1852 First Restrike
SR-13	1856 Circulation Obverse-D	1856 First Restrike Reverse
SR-14	1857 Circulation Obverse-D	1857 First Restrike Reverse
SR-15	1831 Circulation Obverse-E	1831 Second Restrike
SR-16	1-E	1836 Second Restrike
SR-17	2-E	1840 Second Restrike
SR-18	3-E	1841 Second Restrike
SR-19	4-E	1842 Second Restrike
SR-20	5-E	1843 Second Restrike
SR-21	6-E	1844 Second Restrike
SR-22	7-E	1845 Second Restrike
SR-23	8-E	1846 Second Restrike
SR-24	9-E	1847 Second Restrike
SR-25	10-E	1848 Second Restrike
SR-26	12-E	1852 Second Restrike

THE ART OF ACQUIRING HALF CENTS

It has become an economic fact of life that the acquisition of coins has assumed the aspects of investment. One has only to pick up most any numismatic publication to be aware of this fact. The 35th edition of a Guide Book of United States Coins—1982 (The Red Book) has a five page dissertation on the aspects of investing in coins. This article contains all the jargon which is used to promote investments. I noted words and phrases such as "Financial rewards can be reaped, tailored to the individual collector, the tax saving is dramatic, the beauty of such a medium, investment can be maximized, if an individual wished to obtain more leverage, underlying investment, and increase of six-fold" etc. The approach by the author is of a type that I am quite familiar with. From my experience, I doubt such jargon would appear in any financial prospectus submitted to the Securities and Exchange Commission. As a Certified Public Accountant, in public practice, I have been asked by numerous clients, "What do you think of investment in coins?" My answer has always been, "Don't go into this area unless you study it first and have the desire to be a collector. The coin market as an investment is best left to the professionals and the rule of Caveat Emptor applies to anyone entering the field."

Numismatists can be broadly classified as collectors, dealers, and investors. Anyone who professes to be any one of three categories is partly in the other two. Collectors, while accumulating coins for their collections, also become dealers when they dispose of duplicate coins. Collectors also become, whether they are aware of it or not, investors as they accumulate coins for a number of reasons. Most persons are aware of the fact that tax laws exist and it is these laws that force a collector to recognize this aspect of the hobby. The disposal of coins is subject to income tax laws and the death of a collector will usually make his heirs aware of the Federal Estate Tax and any accom-

panying state Inheritance Taxes. It is not my purpose to give tax advice in this book, but to point out that our Government can place a burden upon the pursuit of a hobby. To those who are interested or should be interested, there are many sources of tax advice which should be consulted so as to minimize our Government's role as a silent partner of numismatists.

In the beginning, the tax aspects should be of less importance than the objective to form a collection, if one desires to enter the numismatic field on the hobby basis. This basis is how I entered the field—long before I embarked on my professional career. I still view it as a hobby and believe that great enjoyment can be had by collecting. There are a number of books that have been written to inform one how to collect coins. I am assuming that anyone reading this book has passed that stage and either has a collection of Half Cents or has the desire to form one. The best way to acquire Half Cents is to view as many as possible. This requires attendance at coin shows and visits to coin stores. All Half Cents should be looked at. This book will make it possible to identify varieties if there is no attribution, and if the coin is attributed, it can be checked. Most dealers do not mind a collector using a book and if the dealer expresses concern, it is best not to patronize these persons. By viewing as many coins as possible, a collector will also be able to form some idea of coin grading. All the grading guides are virtually useless unless one gets experience at this art.

Bidding at auction requires more acumen than the direct purchase of a coin. Any person should read the terms of the sale carefully and abide by them. There are a number of auction firms which will mail their catalogues on a subscription basis. I recommend that any person who wishes to acquire Half Cents subscribe to one or more of these auction firms catalogues. The standards of grad-

ing by these firms seems to vary somewhat so that it will take time to learn which auction firms grade in accordance with your standards.

The acquisition of Half Cents from present collectors is one that cannot be ignored. Older collectors usually have duplicates which, depending on the circumstances, may or may not be acquired. Most present Half Cent collectors are members of the Early American Coppers Club, Inc. If the address of this Club is desired it can be obtained from the author.

The purchase of Half Cents by mail from lists published in coin periodicals was at one time virtually the only way to obtain Half Cents. Times have changed and at the present I do not recommend that newer collectors purchase Half Cents this way unless they have read the terms of sale. The first order to a previously unknown mail

seller should be small so as to get some idea of the grading. Beware of the mail order dealer who substitutes coins or issues credit memos on the first order. This method of acquiring Half Cents has been an area that in the past has produced more unhappy results than any other.

I do not believe I have left off any other normal way to acquire Half Cents, but I have in my collection, a Half Cent that I acquired with a metal detector. I do not recommend this method, unless the reader is willing to spend many hours searching. The specimen I have was found by me in the Civil War camp of the 4th Ohio Infantry in Falmouth, Va. where the coin had been lost during the Winter of 1862-63. Numismatically, this 1797 Variety #1 is a low grade coin (BS-1), but to me, like all Half Cents, it is a historical memento of the early years of our Country.

References and Acknowledgments

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- The Alvord Sale by S. H. Chapman on June 9, 1924.
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- Various catalogues of Stacks, Lester Merkin, New Netherlands Coin Co. and other leading auction firms.

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